THE ART AND MAKING OF
CARRY ON

SPOILER WARNING

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War of The Gods

The Creative Team

BESERAT DEBEBE - WRITER

Beserat Debebe is the founder of ETAN COMICS and the writer/creator of HAWI, JEMBER, and ZUFAN.

He was born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Maryland and a Master's degree in Business Administration from Indiana University. In 2018, his love for graphic novels and fantasy stories led him to form ETAN COMICS, a Pan-African entertainment company bringing African stories to life using comics & graphic novels made by African storytellers. His works have been nominated for Best Graphic Novel Awards and featured on BBC, OkayAfrica, ComicsBeat, and more!

UZOR ATUEGWU PETER - ARTIST

Uzor Atuegwu Peter is a comic book artist based in Lagos, Nigeria. A couple of years into college, he began his freelancing career by creating digital art for book covers. He later ventured into comic book illustration due to his genuine love and interest for comic books growing up as a kid. After graduation, he plans to focus more on telling more stories, most especially medieval concepts, fantasy stories and Sci-fi. His dream is to inspire every kid growing up in Nigeria (and hopefully the rest of the world), especially those who aren't exactly opportune to grow up reading comic books.

TOYIN AJETUNMOBI - COLORIST

Toyin Ajetunmobi, popularly known as Morby, is an exceptional and boundary-breaking artist from Lagos, Nigeria whose captivating work has a global audience. His remarkable body of work includes notable comics such as "Windmaker," "Malika" (published by Dark Horse), "Hawi," "Jember," and "Zufan" (published by Etan Comics).

Additionally, he played a vital role in creating illustrations that celebrated the groundbreaking publishing deal between Dark Horse Entertainment and Youneek Studios in the same year. In 2021, Morby received a well-deserved nomination for the Ringo Awards in the esteemed category of Best Colorist. He has also contributed to the world of education as a virtual lecturer at the Governor's School for Arts in Kentucky. Beyond his artistic endeavours, Morby emanates a calm and soft-spoken nature, which belies the intricate landscapes of masterful compositions that flourish within his mind. Outside of his art, he finds solace in reading and indulging in video games.

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How the story ties in today's conversations?

Reactions from the Ethiopian Community

I knew I had to tell this story when I started getting a bit nervous to tell it.

Why nervous? I once made a social media post about the Mythology of injera (Ethiopian food) and how it came from a Dragon God, and I was overwhelmed by hate comments I got from some in the Ethiopian community.

I thought maybe this is a one-time thing, so I made another post about pre-Christian Gods (which also went viral). The hate was even stronger. People were accusing me of trying to convert their kids into atheists or pagans.

It was unhealthy. It felt like an attempt to silence and deny our heritage and history. It was also hypocritical because these same folks did not have any issues showing their kids Thor and stories about other ancient Gods.

I felt this story would move our community in a better direction. One that would start conversations and open minds to possibilities. I had to tell it even if I was nervous about the potential backlash.

Hollywood & Mainstream Media Industry

Hollywood and Mainstream entertainment has come a long way since its inception in terms of being more inclusive, but it is still nowhere near to being an environment that feels safe for Black creatives, Black stories and that allows them to thrive.

Despite having the talent and impressive resume, we continue to be relegated to secondary roles in other people's stories.

Despite proving our stories can break box office records, mainstream companies are very resistant to publish more stories that center us.

The good news is that nowadays there are more ways to reach our audiences directly and make the stuff we want to see in the world. It is easier to be independent now more than ever. We can build our own lane.

That's how this anthology came to be. That's how Etan Comics exists. And hopefully, it will only get better for those who come after us.

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World Building Inspirations

Axumite Empire

The Axumite Empire was the most powerful state between the Eastern Roman Empire and Persia during the 3rd century.

There are massive ruins, obelisks, royal tombs and palaces of the ancient city still found in northern Ethiopia today.

As a major trading hub, Axumite Empire was **home to diverse groups of cultures** and religions from Africa, Arabia, Asia, and the Greco-Roman World.

Its fleet controlled the Red Sea trade through the port of Adulis. During that time, the only country on the African continent which minted coins, was the Aksumite empire.

The steale of Aksum

Influence from South Arabia

Many merchants and tribes from South Arabia used to migrate via the Red Sea to Ethiopia. One of the many contributions of these newcomers was religion.

The pantheon of South Arabia consisted of many gods. Religion entered into every aspect of their lives. It was considered necessary for the success of every being and every act. Sacrifices of various animals were offered, often in great numbers.

The principal god in Ethiopia in pre-Christian times that came as a result of the South Arabian influence was Mahrem; God of War. He was the patron and personal god of the emperors. In Greek inscriptions, Marhem was replaced by Ares.

The influence of South Arabia on Ethiopia can be compared with that of the Greeks upon the Romans. They were not organized colonizers but teachers and traders.

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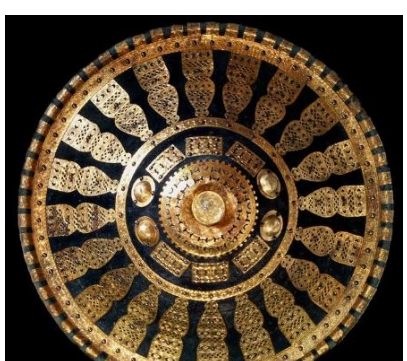
Early sketch design of Mahrem (God Mode)



The God-mode designs of Mahrem's look draw a lot from Ethiopian history and traditional warfare attire.

Many cultures worldwide have warrior outfits that are either inspired by, pay homage to or are in some way connected to the divine figures they revered.

For example: Japanese Samurai sometimes wear fearsome demon masks. Norse Vikings believed they were infused with the power of Odin and thus wore bear or wolf pelts to channel his divine ferocity.

It only made sense to assume that Ethiopian warriors during Aksumite pre-Abrahamic religion era may have been influenced similarly.

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Final design of Mahrem (in God Mode)

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Script to Art Process

PAGE 3

Panel 1:

LOW ANGLE. NIGHT. Red haired Loki body lies dead on the floor with his face starting to disintegrate into layers of ash that float away into the wind. Anansi stands looking down at him.

14. NARRATION: The less people knew about them, the weaker they became. Prey for stronger gods.

Panel 2:

INTERIOR. Multiple images superimposed. Image 1: MOVIE THEATER. People watching a movie on a screen. Image 2: LIVING ROOM. A couple watching ***Metflix*** at home. Image 3: BUS. A girl with headphones watching a video on her phone while riding the bus and holding onto the bus handrail.

15. NARRATION: Centuries passed. Many died. The battle for the hearts and minds of people is now being fought through media and entertainment industry.

Panel 3:

EXTERIOR. CAR. DAY. Mahrem (driver), Bahir (passenger) and Midir (back passenger) ride in a Honda Civic together. Uber sign illuminates.

16. NARROTION: Mahrem and his siblings, ***Bahir (God of the Sea)***, and ***Midir (God of the Land)***, only have a year left to live.

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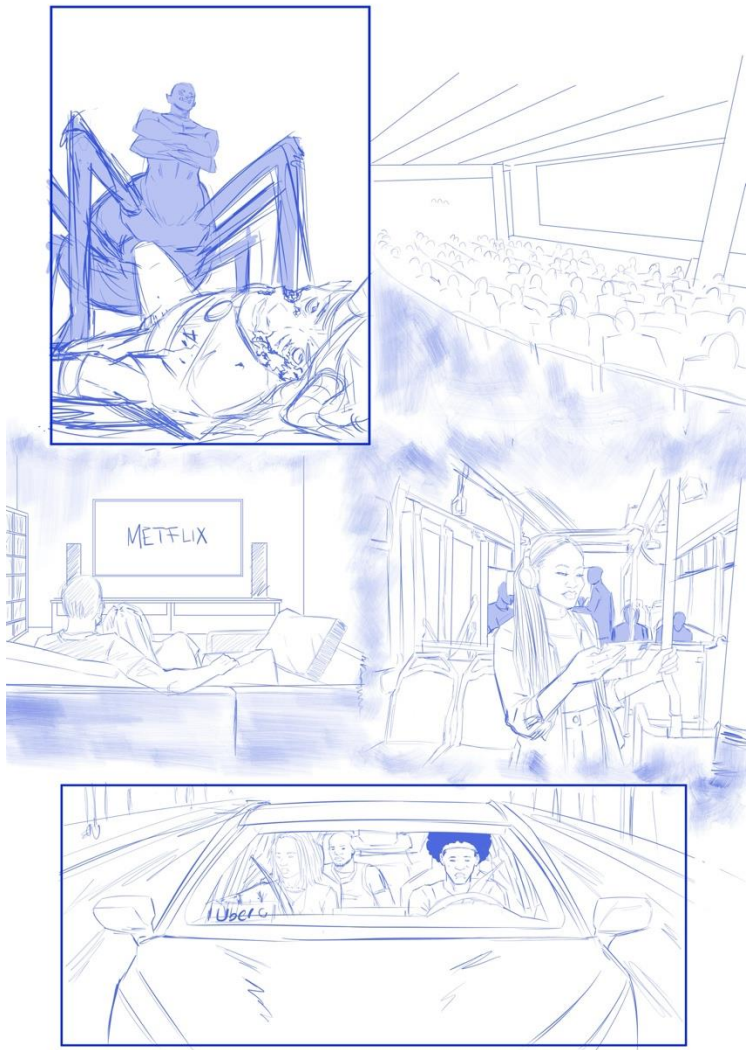

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Script to Art Process

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How this story ties in today's conversations?

Anime and Black culture

Anime has had a strong success with Black audiences. I think this is primarily because it features protagonists who are underdogs. In contrast to the tokenism offered by Western media, it provided archetypes that resonate deeply with marginalized identities. Ones they could identify with emotionally.

However, there is also a lot of anti-Black caricatures and misrepresentation in anime. Black characters are often stereotyped as loud, hypersexual, violent, exoticized or depicted as a monolith. Anime often equates beauty with light skin, straight hair, and big eyes. Black characters are rarely romantic leads.

Black kids who love anime still grow up not seeing themselves as protagonists, not seeing healthy Black families and Black futures. This can enforce the idea that full humanity is reserved for others.

Anime is a cultural product. Perhaps the issue is not just with biases in Japanese culture but also in who has access to create, distribute and define content. Just like in the West, there aren't many opportunities for Black creatives and studios to create and distribute their stories.

If a medium doesn't represent us well, should we embrace and support it? How do we create an ecosystem where Black-created content competes fairly, spreads freely and earns support – not just support out of solidarity?

Mr. Popo (Dragon Ball Z)
Minstrel-style caricature.

Canary (Hunter x Hunter)
Black girl servant; stoic, loyal, quiet

Killer Bee (Naruto Shippuden)
Reductive Rapper = Black guy trope

Sister Krone (The Promised Neverland)
Mammy Caricature

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Script to Art Process

PAGE 4

Panel 1:

BACK TO PRODUCER OFFICE. TWO SHOT. Mahrem threatens producer. Producer rolls his eyes.

17. MAHREM: I can strike you down right here.
18. PRODUCER: Please don't make this more awkward than it is.

Panel 2:

MOMENT TO MOMENT SHOT. Mahrem raises his arms, with his fingers splayed as if channeling energy and attempting to cast a spell at the producer. His face shows concentration. Eyebrows furrowed, eyes wide or slightly squinted. The producer just looks at him calmly with a blank stare. Nothing is happening.

Panel 3:

MOMENT TO MOMENT SHOT. Mahrem stares at his hands, palms up, as if he had expected something to have happened but didn't. Producer continues to stare at him.

Panel 4:

MOMENT TO MOMENT. Mahrem tries again. Similar shot as Panel 2 but slightly different hand pose.

Panel 5:

MOMENT TO MOMENT. Mahrem, finally giving up, just stares back at Producer.

Panel 6:

CUT TO: Security drag out Mahrem from the office.

19. MAHREM: No. Wait-

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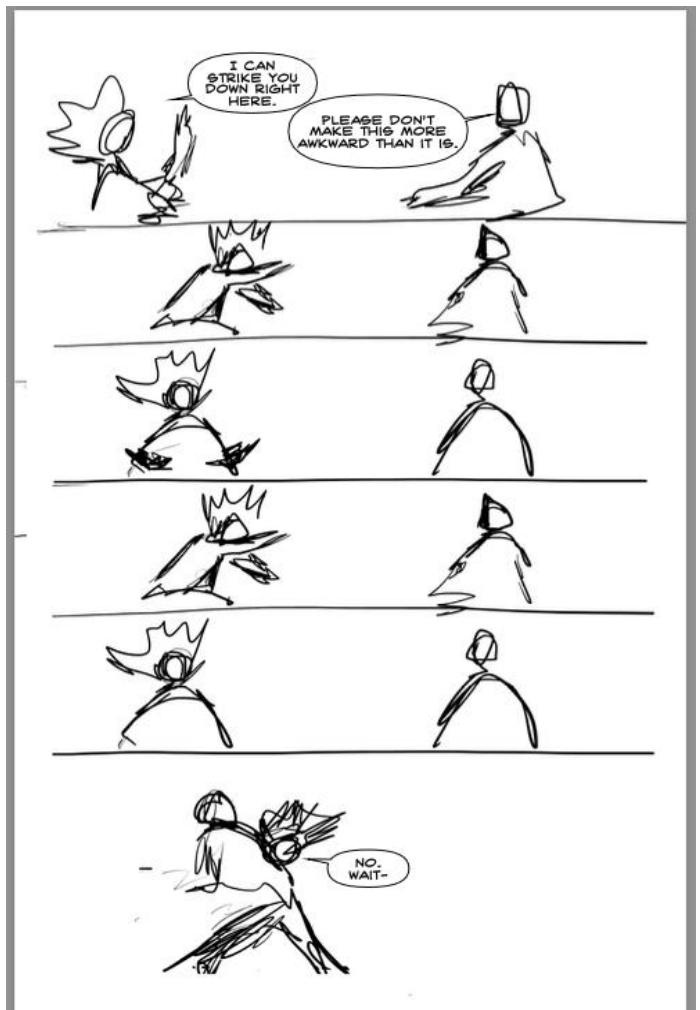

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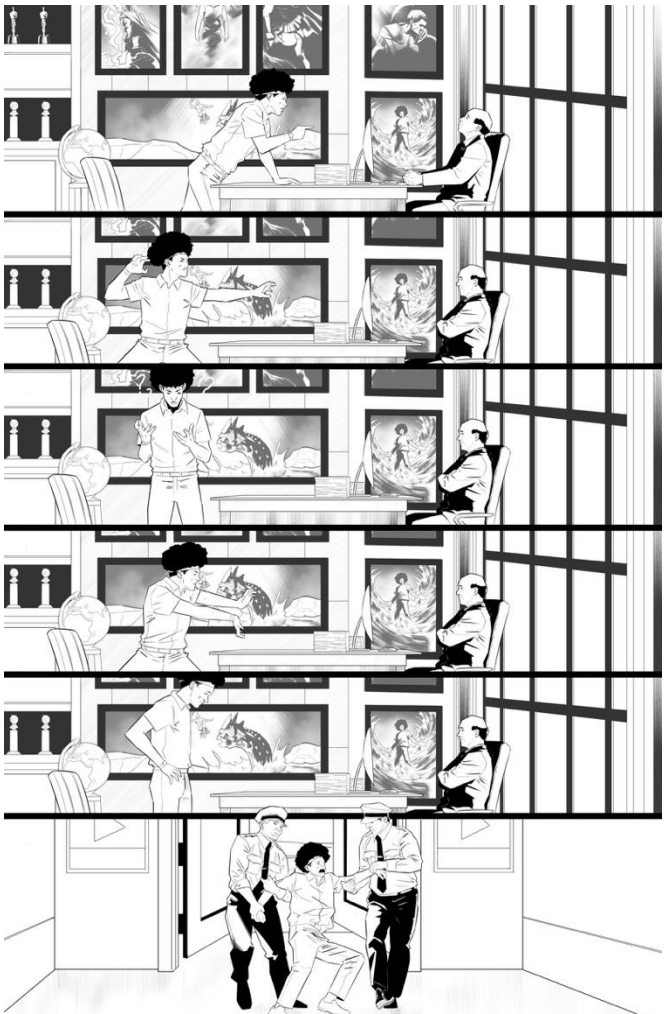
Script to Art Process



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How this story ties in today’s conversations?

Sensi’il: An Ethiopian Term for Comics

Did you know that Ethiopian Comic books are called SENSI’ILs (ሰንሥዕል)? Ethiopia has a very rich visual storytelling heritage. Back in the 17th century, Ethiopians invented a comic book like art form called SENSUL (ሰንሱል) to tell religious stories.

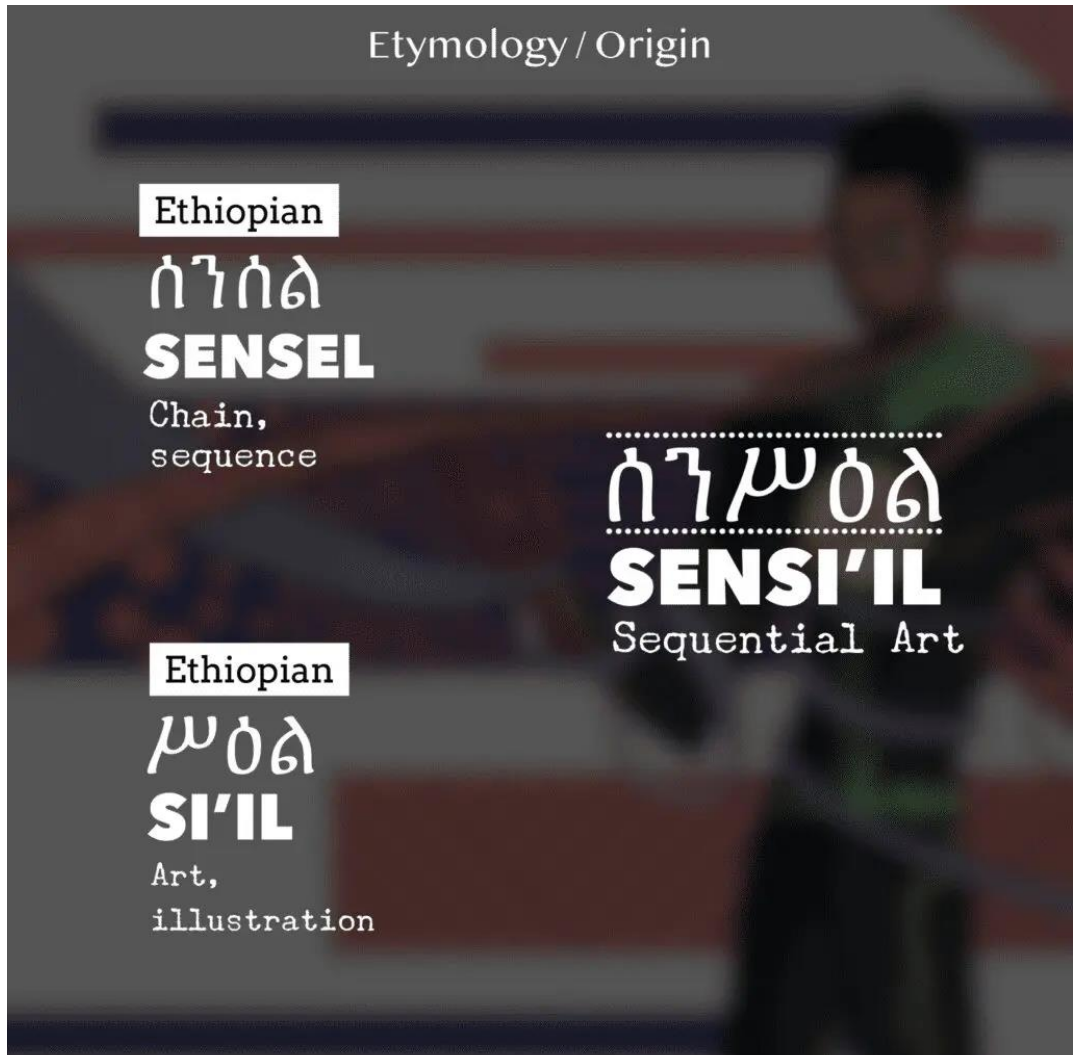
The book folded and unfolded like an accordion. It was made from a single strip of parchment, and it would tell a sequential story when it unfolds. It usually had no texts but if it did, it would be short prayers and hymns. SENSULs are still in use in present day Ethiopia so we coined a new term to encompass all genres of stories and pay homage to our rich heritage. And that term is SENSI’IL (ሰንሥዕል).

SENSI’IL is derived from two Amharic words. The first one is SENSEL meaning chain or sequential, and the second is SI’IL (ሥዕል) meaning art or drawing. Together, it translates to sequential art. SEN-SI-IL (ሰንሥዕል) is pronounced “Sun-Si-IL”.

Just like how the Manga brought Japanese culture to the forefront of the visual storytelling industry, we intend to do the same with Sensi’ils & Ethiopian culture.

Dive into Sensi’ils today using **Etan Comics’ award nominated African comic books and graphic novels!**

-Beserat from ETAN COMICS



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YZAANA'S LAST RACE

BEHIND THE SCENES

MEET THE CREATIVE TEAM

Emmanuel Kayembe is a Young African Writer who aspires to create authentic stories that resonate with readers. He spends much of his time fine-tuning his craft by attending lectures, practicing, and dedicating his weekends to writing short scripts. Recently, he traveled to Nigeria to study its unique art and culture before returning to his home in Congo.
instagram- @thesoundofcomics

Yussuf Adeleye is a professional comic illustrator from Nigeria with years of experience illustrating stories in dynamic linework. He practices until he runs out of coffee and revisits the works of his favorite mangakas in his leisure, all to one day publish his first creator owned comic. One day soon.
instagram- @adeleyeyussuf_yuyu
Artstation -https://adeleyeyussuf.artstation.com/

THE WORLD OF YZAANA'S LAST RACE

The story takes place in a primitive town of the distant future that struggles to pull free from the relentless invasion of Central African waters with primitive biomechanical replacements, at the fringes of a biomechanically sophisticated society.
- Kayembe

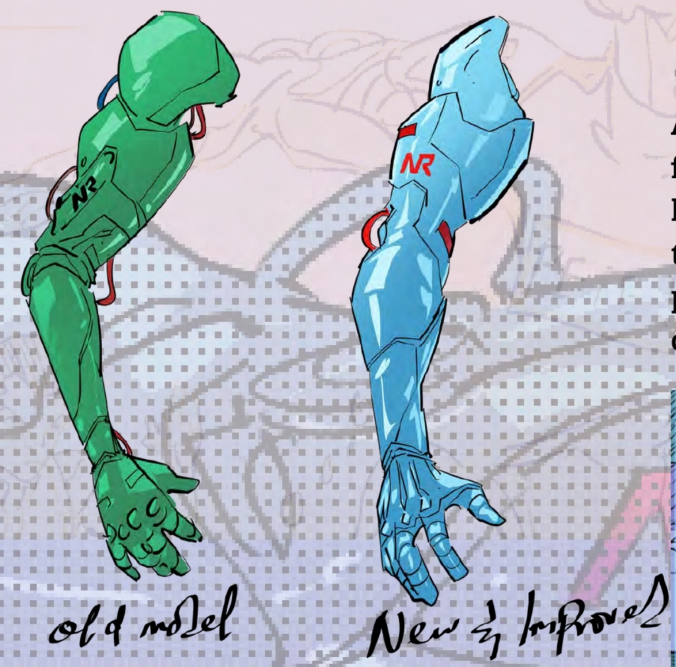
We realized that, as the story was laid out, we weren't going to have a lot of opportunities to showcase the setting of the story. We then tried to focus on the primary component of the setting and of the story, which was the rain and flood. I debated whether to do a muddy looking flood with murky water (which I thought was representative of my personal experience, growing up in West Africa) but I thought better of it. I chose instead to celebrate the beautiful rain that we have around here. That led me to a lovely blue/green color for the flood and I thought it was a good choice as it complemented the bright orange of the rescue teams uniform so well.
- Adeleye

YZAANA

Yzaana is an athlete with more endurance over power and a deep, protective love for Nuani, her brother. Competing in a world built for the biomechanically enhanced, that leaves the weak behind, she is slower, weaker and painfully human, and struggles between proving herself and changing herself for a brother she won't leave behind.
Yzaana's journey shows how migration can cost you what you love, and sometimes you find comfort in the lesser cost.
— Kayembe

At the beginning, as we conceptualized the story, I think the design of Yzaana was one of the few things we didn't go back and forth on. knowing the deadline wasn't too far away, I thought it was essential to keep the design of the most recurring character as simple as possible and Emmanuel agreed. I made sure to give her a simple hairstyle (simple to draw, at least) and for her sportswear we just went with black with a few stripes. for her rescue uniform (her and the rest of the team) we thought a bold orange color with red backpack allows for great visibility in the storm (like with traffic cones) and the puffiness offers some protection in harsh environments
-Adeleye

NEOREACH



Along with references of real world bionic designs, a big reference for the Bionics was Dc comic's Cyborg. We wanted a design that looked futuristic (but not too much), sleek and efficient. I thought that an afrofuturistic design aesthetic might feel a little out of place in such an ordinary setting, so it had to be something that could realistically exist in that world. - Adeleye

NEOREACH
New and improved

WORK PROCESS

ACT ONE

PAGE(S): ONE

EXT. RACE TRACK — SUNNY DAY

Long. The racers start.

Mid/Close. Yzara pulls ahead. Her mother and brother cheer from the stands in the background.

Low. Yzara's leg stands in focus. Her competition dwindles in the background.

Close. Yzara's closest competitor keeps up enough to almost brush elbows with her.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTRICTED FOREST — RAINY NIGHT

Mid. The BIONIC CONDUCTRESS bursts past Yzara so she stumbles and crashes into the OLD BIONIC FARMER before she lands in the dirt. The contents of her bag, which include her medal and her mother's scarf, spill out around her. In the background far ahead NUANI jumps off the futuristic shuttle towards her.

SFX

(Thud/Crash?)

NUANI

YZARA! (distant)

YZARA

Gghhnn!!

Sorry, sorry, I should've been more careful, are you--

FARMER

Hmm?

The Old Bionic Farmer stands unmoved and glances over his shoulder at her. Yzara's shocked eyes meet his. He looks down at the spilled contents of her bag. She looks down at his bionic limbs branded *NeoReach*. He turns back to push his cart. She turns to her emptied bag when her concern fades to acceptance.

A collaboration with Yussuf is a more rewarding experience when his visual storytelling and developmental editing skills are as involved as his pencils, so my scripts for him are often more like screenplays.
- Kayembe

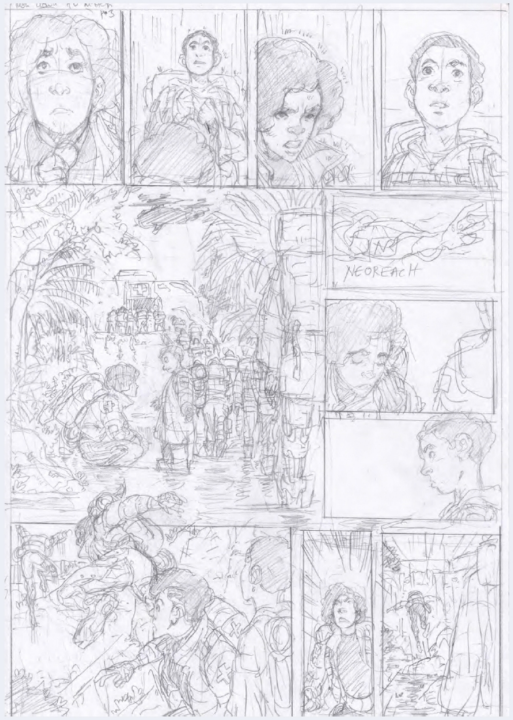
Emmanuel and I have worked together many times before, this meant our process was pretty much streamlined. I usually do a very rough layout of the story at the start of the project just get a feel for it and once we're on the same page, I'll go ahead with pencils. For this project I decided to do the pencils traditionally, which I always enjoy because it allows me sketch very freely without worrying about buttons or clicking. I send the pencils to Emmanuel who looks it over and suggest changes. Once the changes are implemented, I'll move ahead with inks and colors. After which Emmanuel takes over with this fine lettering. - Adeleye

WORK PROCESS

One of those changes can be seen on the 5th panel of page 6 where a better angle on Yzanna was suggested to help the composition and also have Nuani in the shot. We went with the new composition and I'm sure you'll agree that It clearly worked out better.
-Adeleye

I thought it would be poetic to have the layout of the last page the same as the layout of the first for a sort of emotional full-circle moment.
-Kayembe

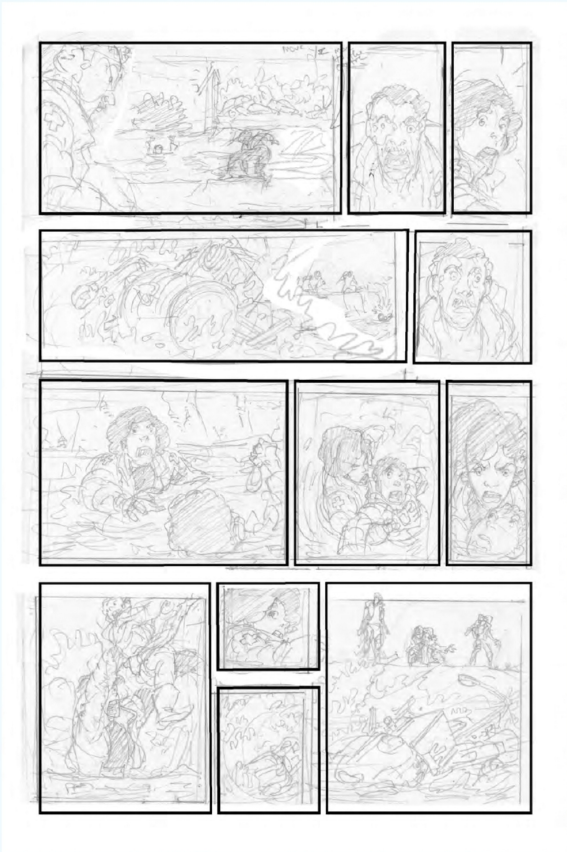
WORK PROCESS



This was perhaps one of the most tedious pages to illustrate and especially to color. It was an important page in the story because it introduced Yzaana and Nuani's first conversation and we get to see the exodus party behind them making for the shuttles. Thanks to Beserat, we were able to rearrange the top panels to make for a more interesting and natural interaction between the siblings and I think it was all worth it, -Adeleye

WORK PROCESS

This is probably my favorite page in the story. The end result of this page is the cumulative effort of Emmanuel's brilliant writing, my illustration and the genius of Beserat. This is to show how one suggestion can completely transform the look and feel of a comic book page and influence a story -Adeleye



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

BEHIND THE SCENES

EXODUS

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Shiferaw Yinessu is a comic book writer, artist, and creative director based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. His practice is a space where sharp ideas meet raw instinct. Through ink and panels, he explores high-concept storytelling in Sci-fi and fantasy.

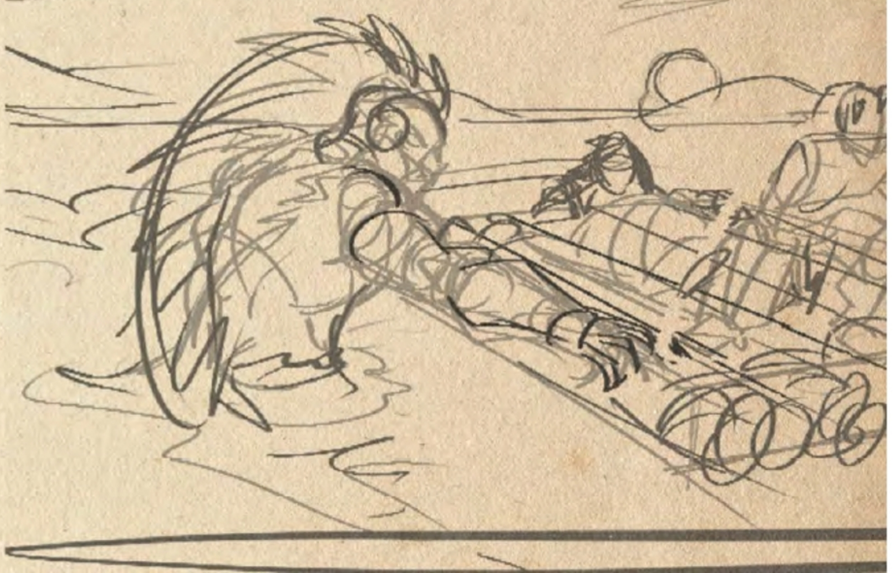
He pulls from the mythical and magical aspect of Ethiopian and African history and lore to create his worlds.

IG: @sketchy_stroxx

CHARACTER DESIGNS

Given the nature of the story, I prioritized panel composition and storytelling flow over detailed character design in the early stages. My approach was to establish the rhythm and pacing first and let the characters' silhouette and costume follow the rhythms. Afterwards my decisions were shaped by the realities of the hunter gatherer lifestyle which required every member to be fit and agile enough to survive the many obstacles- ranging from saber tooth cats and storms to bacterial infections which could mean certain death- the prehistoric world threw at our ancestors.

EARLY SKETCHES



WORLD BUILDING

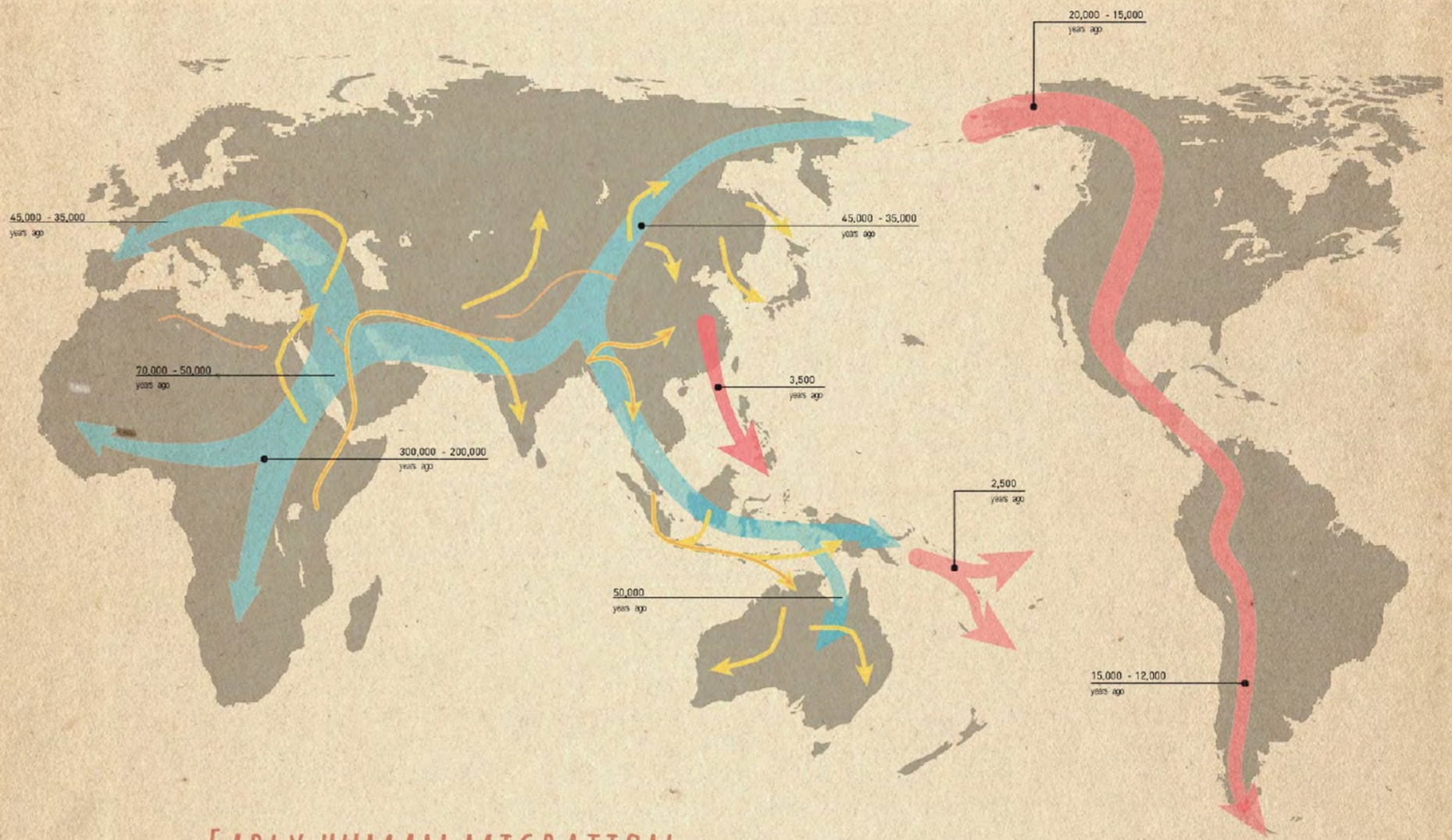
THE WORLD OF EXODUS

Exodus explores migration across time, interweaving two parallel narratives: one set 70,000 years ago, when a prehistoric family crosses the Red Sea as part of the second wave of early human migration from East Africa, and another in the present day, where modern migrants attempt a perilous journey across the same waters. The story highlights how climate change, survival, and human displacement remain timeless struggles.

REAL-LIFE AND HISTORICAL INSPIRATIONS

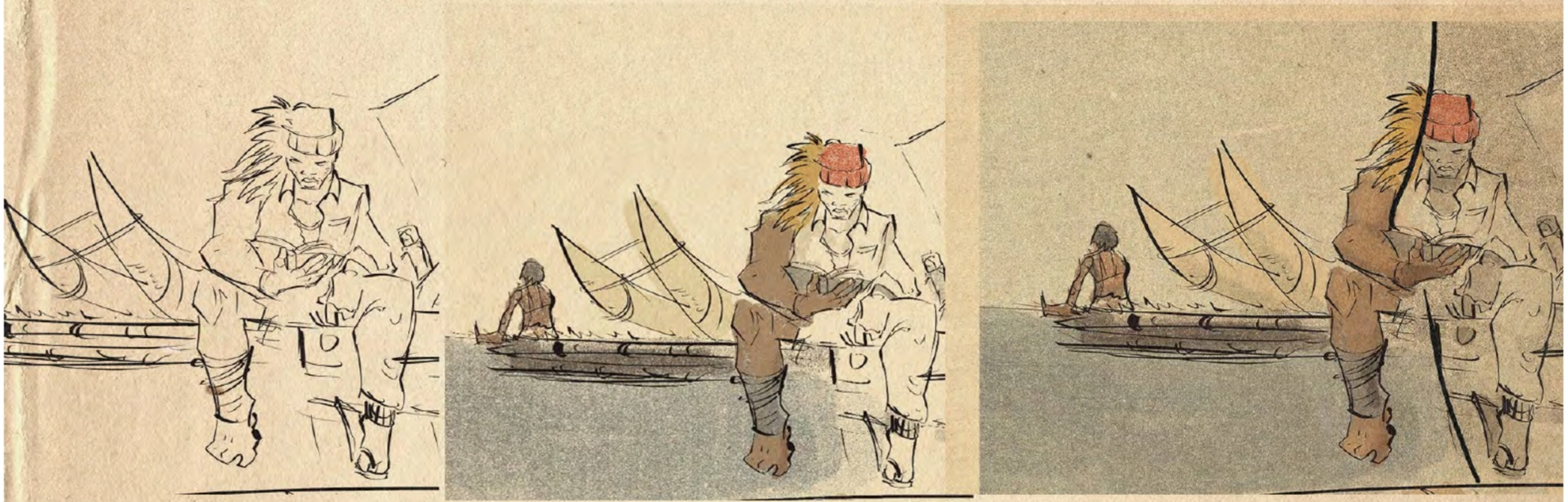
The prehistoric migration is based on anthropological and genetic evidence suggesting early humans left Africa due to shifting climates. The modern segment reflects contemporary refugee crises, drawing from real events where migrants risk their lives on cargo ships and dinghies, facing uncertain fates.

WORLD BUILDING



EARLY HUMAN MIGRATION

ART PROCESS



LINE ART .....FLATS .....LIGHTING + TEXTURE

EASTER EGGS

RED SEA CROSSING: The title ' Exodus' in the bible refers to the migration of an ancient Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. In a famous scene Moses parts the Red Sea and the people walk across it. Coincidentally 70,000 years ago Early humans had to cross the same sea at the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.

ENDING : both the ancient family and the modern migrant find themselves inside the same cave at the end of the story; ancient hand prints visible at the cave where the modern migrant is being taken into custody.

SYMBOLIC ACCEPTANCE: The warm welcome of early migrants contrasts with the hostility faced by today's displaced people, underscoring historical shifts in attitudes toward migration and how a world without borders ended up giving way to a world with.

Creative Influences

Visually and narratively, Exodus draws from:
Prehistoric cave art and early human storytelling traditions.
Documentary photography capturing modern migration crises.
Historical accounts of human movement across continents.
Social and political discourse on climate refugees and border policies.

Final Thoughts

Exodus is a meditation on migration as an enduring human experience, showing how the need to move for survival is as ancient as humanity itself. The dual timelines serve as a reminder of both progress and persistent inequalities in how societies treat those seeking refuge.

THANK YOU

Behind The Scenes:

JORO-MII

STORY BY
CUISEL PEACH & JOHN UCHE

ART BY **FRANCIS GOODLUCK**

LETTERS BY **CUISEL PEACH**

EDITOR: **BESERAT DEBEDE**

PUBLISHER: **ETAN COMICS**

CREATIVE TEAM

CUISEL PEACH
Writer/ Letterer

Cuisel Joshua Peach is a Graphic Novelist, Narrative Designer, and storyboard artist with a flair for African history and myths. and World building. He is also an award nominated letterer with notable works like *Grimm's Assistant, Celestial Eyes* and *Ulofyu*.

JOHN UCHE
Writer

John Uche is a storyteller and comic writer with a love for history, culture, and art. His more notable comic book – *Celestial Eyes* has gathered praise for its unique blend of mysticism, culture and action. John Uche loves to read comics and manga. He also loves good movies and anime.

FRANCIS GOODLUCK
Artist/ Colorist/ Illustrator

Francis Goodluck began as an animator before transitioning to his passion – comic creation like the webtoon *How to get your crush in 90 days*, the pirate comic *Fez* by **Tlou**, and most recently, *Celestial Eyes* by **John Uche** which has given him more recognition as an artist and a colourist.

CHARACTER DESIGNS

JORO- An all-round rough, tough guy, Joro serves as one-half of the Joro-mii sibling. Despite his demeanor, Joro cares about his sister and wishes to help and protect her.

MII- A scientist and visionary, Mii lives with the regret of the destruction of the planet's ecosystem from the abuse of her creation. This drives her to make a change and save the world.

JORO

MII

Ugbogi- The Spirit King

UGBOGI- Based on the actual seven-headed spirit from Bini lore, Ugbogiorinmwin. He serves as the main antagonist of the story, the spirit king and the guardian of Imade, the spirit tree.

What makes his character interesting is how his intentions either can be understood as cruel or as a necessity. Ugbogi holds a grudge against humans who have destroyed the planet's ecosystem.

FLYING SPIRITS

The ancient Bini culture is full of lore on masks that contain spirits of ancestors.

For the creation of lesser spirits in service to **Ugbogi**, we went the way of creating our own version of a spirit mask that borrows from Bini masquerades.

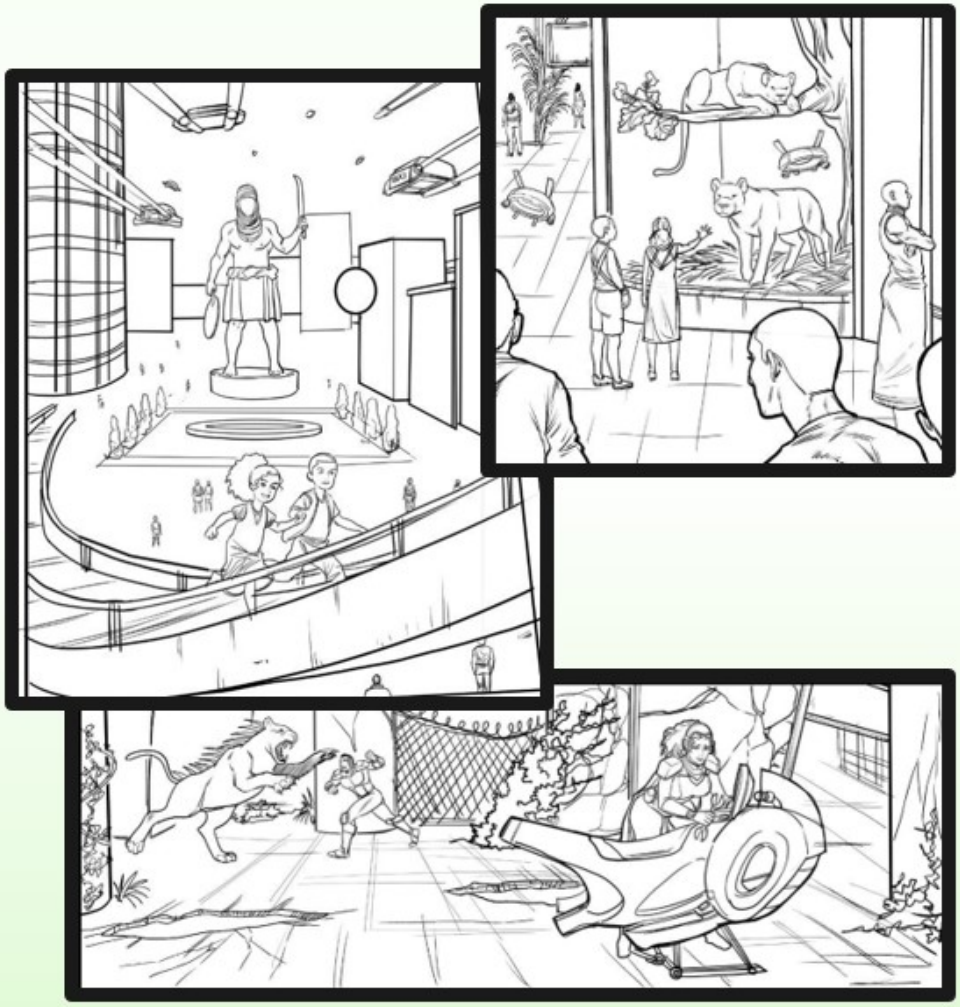
The Bini **Elimi festival** brought us a lot of ideas on what spirit masks to choose from.

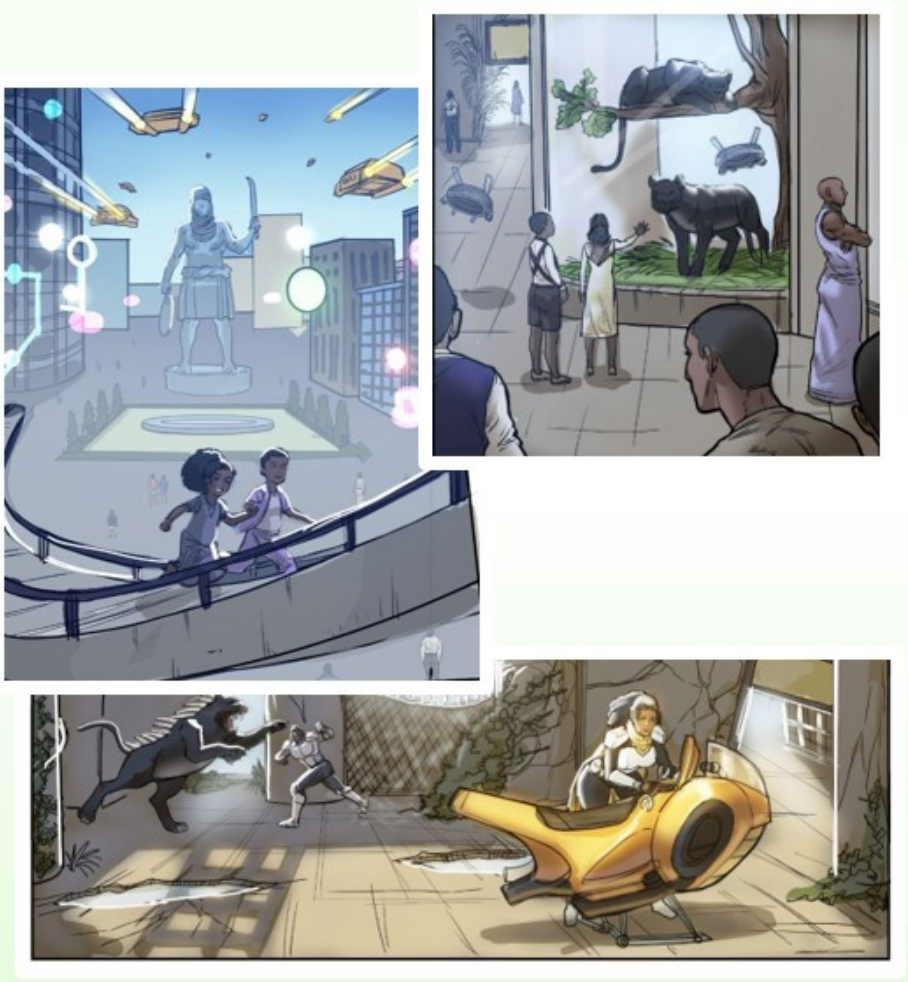
WORLD BUILDING

Inspired by the legend of Joromi (or Igioromi), the story gives a futuristic feel to what was otherwise a folktale originating from the Bini/Benin people of Nigeria.

In this world, the planet's ecosystem has fallen to rot from the actions of humanity. Blending mysticism with science allows for the idea that **'Imade'**- the spirit tree, is the source of all green life on earth. It also serves as the home of spirits on the planet.

The main characters: Joro and Mii are a play on **Joromi**, the actual character from the folklore it was inspired by. With his sister unnamed in the original lore, his name was split for creative expression.





The original Joromi folktale speaks of Joromi, a champion wrestler driven by ego to wrestle with spirits. After defeating all the lesser spirits, he meets the spirit king with sevenheads who defeats and kills him. Joromi is resurrected by his witch/apothecary sister after she snuck into the spirit world without his knowledge.

Together, they fled the spirit world with the spirit king hot in pursuit. He nearly catches up with them as they cross the barrier between humans and spirits, wounding Joromi with his claws on his back and giving him the groove all humans all have on their backs.

Fun fact: The song 'Joromi' by the late Sir Victor Uwaifo also recounts the folktale in the Bini tongue.

ART PROCESS

PAGE 1

The first page establishes the perilous state of the planet's ecosystem caused by the dying of the spirit tree Imade. Through Mii's monologue, the reader is notified of three key points.

1: The exodus of spirits from the human world following the death of the spirit tree.

2: The feeling of disdain which the spirits have for humanity.

3: The death of the spirit tree was caused by humans.

Finally, she brings our attention to her and her brother Joro's, successful heist of stealing the last of the spirit seeds from the spirits.

PAGE 2

The second page introduces Ugbogi, the seven-headed spirit king. He orders the winged lesser spirits to retrieve the stolen spirit seed. Ugbogi acts as the consequence of their action, a hurdle they have to overcome.

We are also treated to the spectacle of what the world looks like after the devastation of the ecosystem and the spirit tree's death. It is a wasteland, full of ruins from civilization.

Joro and Mii work together to rid themselves of the lesser spirits hot on their trail to get to the *Green earth*, where they hope to plant the seed.

ART PROCESS

PAGE 3

The siblings are met with their first setback when their bike explodes.

Joro urges his sister to finish what they've started, opting to sacrifice himself to stall Ugbogi and the lesser spirits. Mii is understandably hesitant about his intentions but is forced to carry on with it leaving Joro behind.

Page three focus on the character of each sibling and how their ideals highlights their personalities.

PAGE 4

Page four is exposition and dialogue heavy. The spirit king and Joro get into both a conflict of physicality and a conflict of ideals. Ugbogi orders Joro to return the spirit seed to which Joro refuses.

Ugbogi also reminds Joro that it was his sister's attempt at fixing the world, that tyrants exploited – she made a substance to cure all sickness, and it was turned into a biological weapon.

It is here that we understand what caused the death of Imade, the spirit tree.

ART PROCESS

PAGE 5

Joro (who believes in his sister), shows his resolve to keep Ugbogi away from Mii until she gets to the *Green earth*. He believes himself to be a sacrifice for her and for a new world.

This page shows his vulnerability and insecurity; Joro sees himself as all brute strength and muscle while Mii is the brilliant one. He tells the spirit king that his sister may have made a mistake but she is capable of fixing it.

Unfortunately, Joro is met with death.

PAGE 6

The final page is a hope-driven feast of words and visuals.

Joro's monologue ends the story with the assurance of a new and better world. The art also reveals that Mii was successful in growing a new spirit tree. Her actions are heralded by the lesser spirit who welcome the new spirit tree as their home.

The planet's ecosystem is repaired and Joro's spirit congratulates his sister.

We appreciate the opportunity to tell an inspired African story, one that we hope has left you satisfied.

THANK YOU

FOR SUPPORTING AND BACKING THIS PROJECT OF OURS.

It's been our pleasure, and we look forward to your thoughts and positive remarks.

Behind The Scenes of

The ORUNMILA Codex

Presented by : Cassandra Mark

About the Artist

Cassandra Mark is a 25 Year old Writer and Animator, known mostly for her work Tatashe. She is an Award winning creator with almost a decade of experience and an obsession with Mythology and Archaeology.

Characters

Adaora Solace

Role: Xenoarchivist, Cryptologist

Personality: Adaora is deeply connected to her Nigerian heritage, blending spirituality with her scientific mind. She is calm, methodical, and holds a reverence for her ancestors, but struggles with questioning whether the path laid out for her is truly her own or simply part of a larger, predestined plan.

Characters

Tahir

Role: Alien Companion, Outsider, Soul-Seeker

Personality: Tahir is a complex figure—part alien, part AI—struggling with his identity. He is sarcastic ,depressed and uses humor to subvert the pain,he suffers from holding an initially limited worldview that conflicts with his growing understanding of the emerging sides of his nature. He questions his purpose, feeling lost between the technological culture of his own people and the more primal instincts that define who he has grown into .

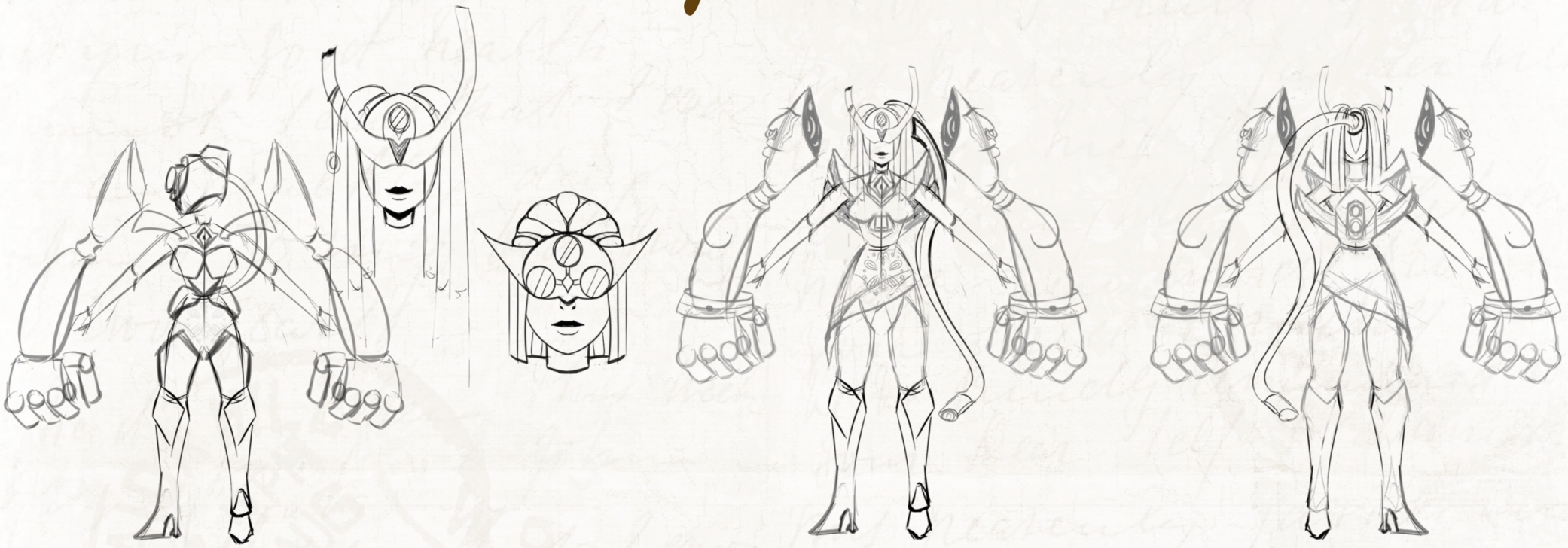
World Building

ORUNMILA CONCEPT ART

Set in the year 9085 B29, the universe is a delicate balance between ancient wisdom and advanced technology. At the heart of the story lies the Orunmila Codex, a powerful relic containing the secrets of the universe, whose origins trace back to the celestial realms. The Lost Planet, shrouded in mystery, is the key to unlocking these secrets, drawing the attention of intergalactic civilizations.The story navigates the complexities of History, fate vs. free will, personal destiny vs. universal significance, and the spiritual odyssey of Adaora and Tahir as they confront their true roles in the grand cosmic design.

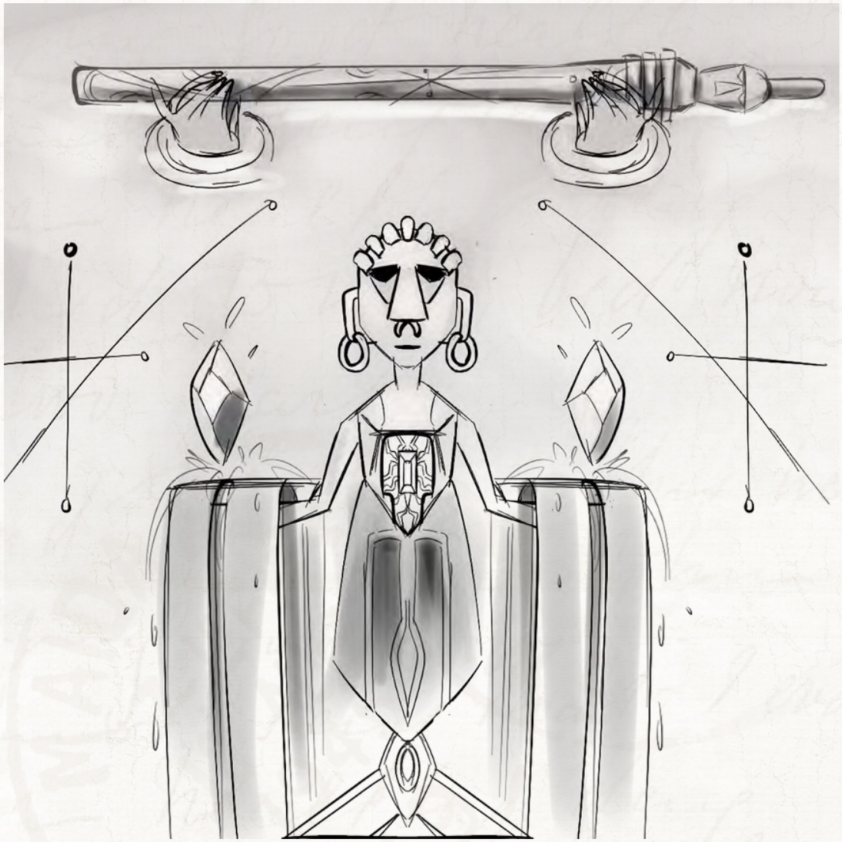
The Nri Kingdom and its ties to Igbo spirituality form the foundation of Adaora's planet. The Nri people believed in the sacredness of the earth and the balance between spirituality and material existence, concepts that are central to the Orunmila Codex. The Codex itself is rooted in the Yoruba mythology of Orunmila, the deity of wisdom, knowledge, and fate. However, the Igbo spirituality in Adaora's world acts as a counterbalance, offering a distinct worldview where ancestral spirits and deities guide the universe's order.

Concpet Art

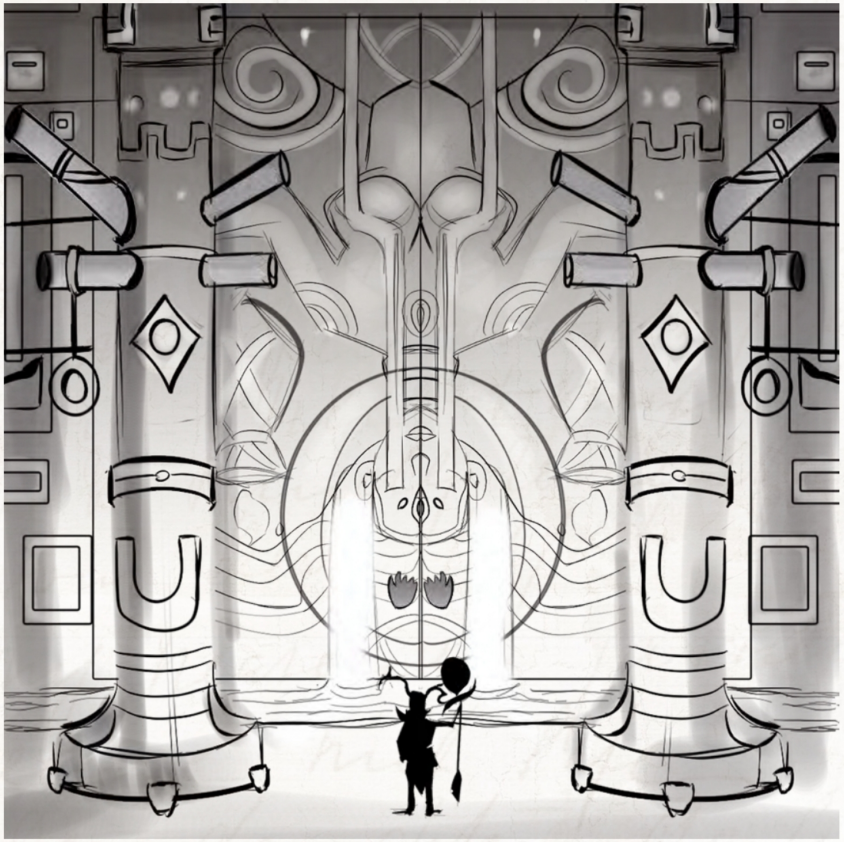


INITIAL GUNDAM CONCEPT ART

Concpet Art



CONTROL PANEL OF ADAORA'S SHIP- GEM POWERED TECH



TEMPLE OF ORUNMILA HIEROGLYPHS

Thank You

To, everyone who supports Orunmila's Codex & this book—thank you. This story is a piece of my heart, woven with mythology, sci-fi, and the endless question of what it means to be human. Whatever form that journey may take. Your support means the world, and I hope this journey stays with you long after the last page.

May fate and free will guide you in equal measure.

– Cassandra Mark

ONE FOOTFALL...

CREATIVE TEAM

Writer

Recipient of the (Lagos Comic Con 2023) Fist Award for Writer of the Decade, **Murewa Ayodele** is the writer of the Nommo-nominated comic book series New Men, the critically acclaimed webcomic series My Grandfather Was a God, and several Marvel comics like Storm, I Am Iron Man, Moon Knight: Black, White & Blood, and Avengers Unlimited Infinity Comic. He is also the co-founder of Collectible Comics NG, a Nigerian comic book studio founded with artist Dotun Akande that was nominated in the Comic Studio of the Year category at the 2018 Fist Awards. Murewa has worked as a professional comic book writer for almost a decade, with over 10 comic book titles under his belt.

Artist

Dotun Akande is an award-winning comic book cover artist and graphics designer who has worked with some of the biggest brands in Nigeria. He was the recipient of the (Lagos Comic Con 2018) Fist Award for Best Cover Artist and has created comic covers for comic book series like I Am Iron Man, Cable: Love and Chrome, Vengeance of the Moon Knight, Black Panther, Moon Girl and Devil Dinosaur, and Heir of Apocalypse. He is also the artist behind the Nommo-nominated comic book series New Men, the critically acclaimed webcomic series My Grandfather Was a God, and several Marvel comics like I Am Iron Man, Moon Knight: Black, White & Blood, and Avengers Unlimited Infinity Comic. Dotun has worked as a professional comic book storyteller for almost a decade, with over 10 comic book titles under his belt.

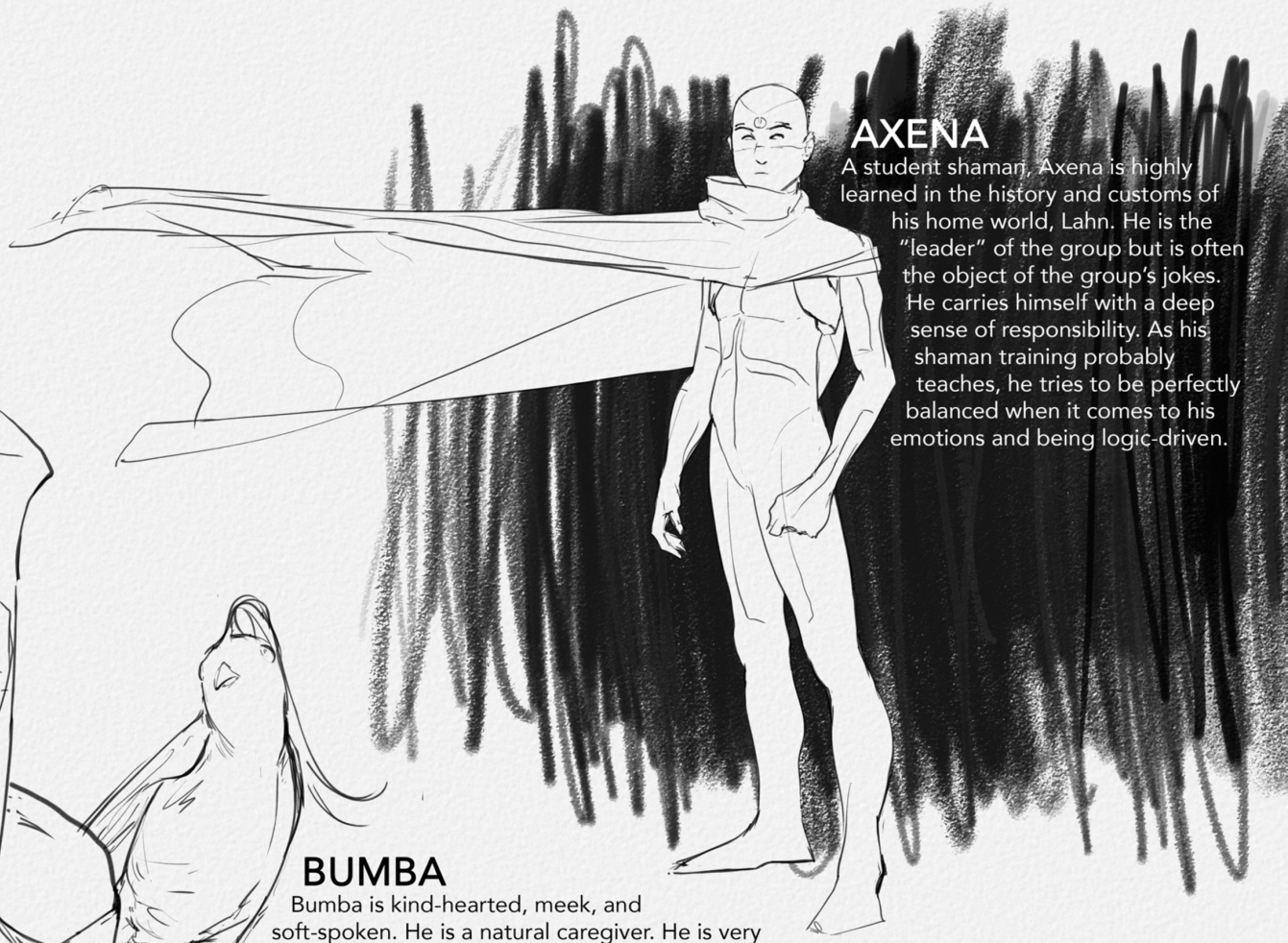
CHARACTER DESIGNS

SAHM

Sahm is the most logic-driven of the trio. He is practical and understands that life is about compromises. He can be stoic yet he allows himself to be vulnerable enough to be close friends with Bumba and Axena – making him super capable of having fun with the rest of the gang. His creation was inspired by the artist of the story, Dotun Akande.

AXENA

A student shaman, Axena is highly learned in the history and customs of his home world, Lahn. He is the "leader" of the group but is often the object of the group's jokes. He carries himself with a deep sense of responsibility. As his shaman training probably teaches, he tries to be perfectly balanced when it comes to his emotions and being logic-driven.



BUMBA

Bumba is kind-hearted, meek, and soft-spoken. He is a natural caregiver. He is very in touch with his emotions and will not compromise his values for anything. This makes him very vulnerable to negative emotions like depression even though he is also capable of great joy. His creation was inspired by the writer of the story, Murewa Ayodele.

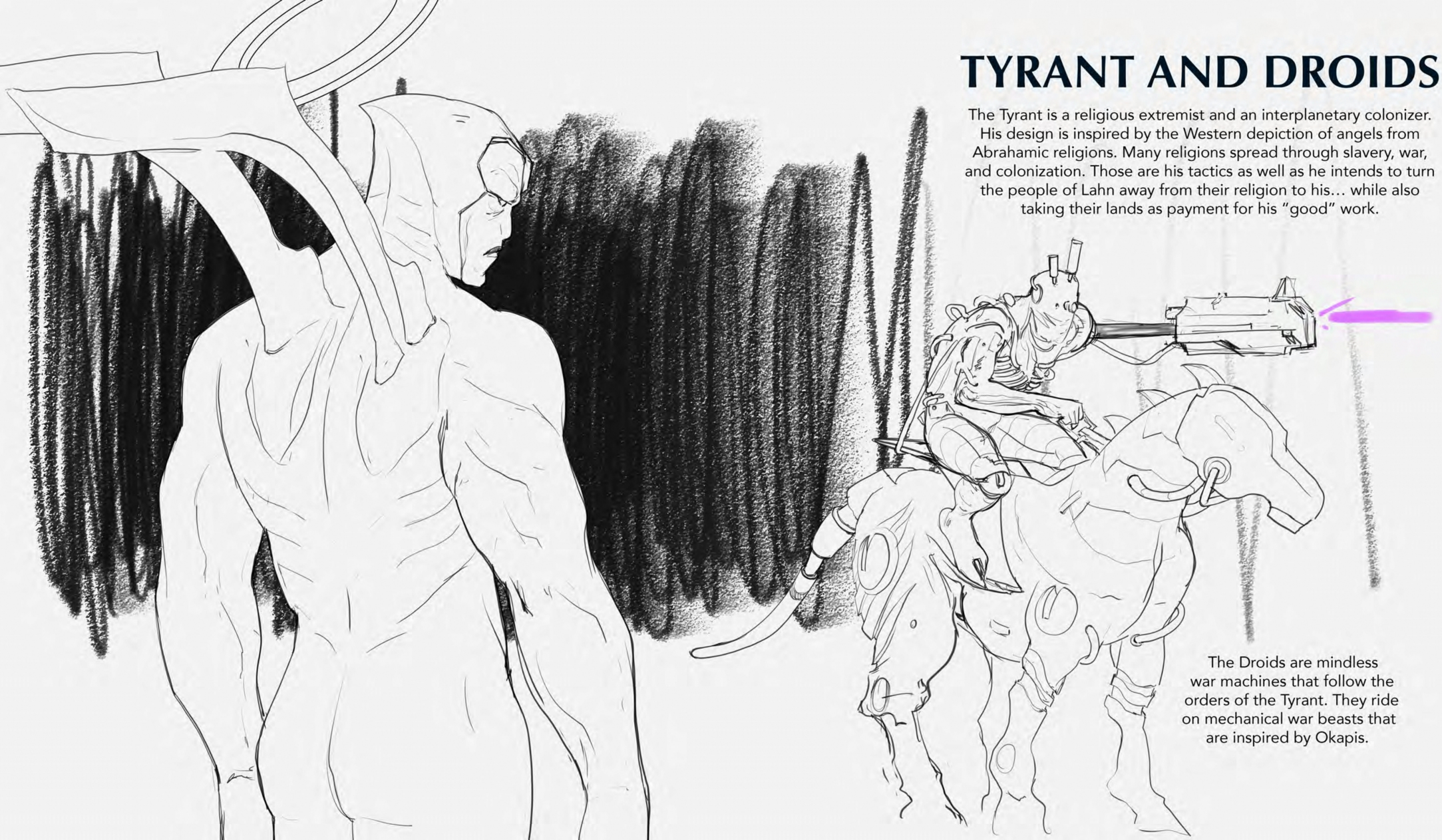
THE SHAMANS

The people of Lahn believe that their homeworld is the way it is because an immortal being – a god, sacrificed his immortality to give their planet life. That being is known as the First Shaman. Ever since, some Lahnians are born with magical abilities and they are taught the ways of the First Shaman.

It is believed that if all the shamans on the homeworld died off, the planet of Lahn would die off too, for they are eternally linked through the spirit of the First Shaman.

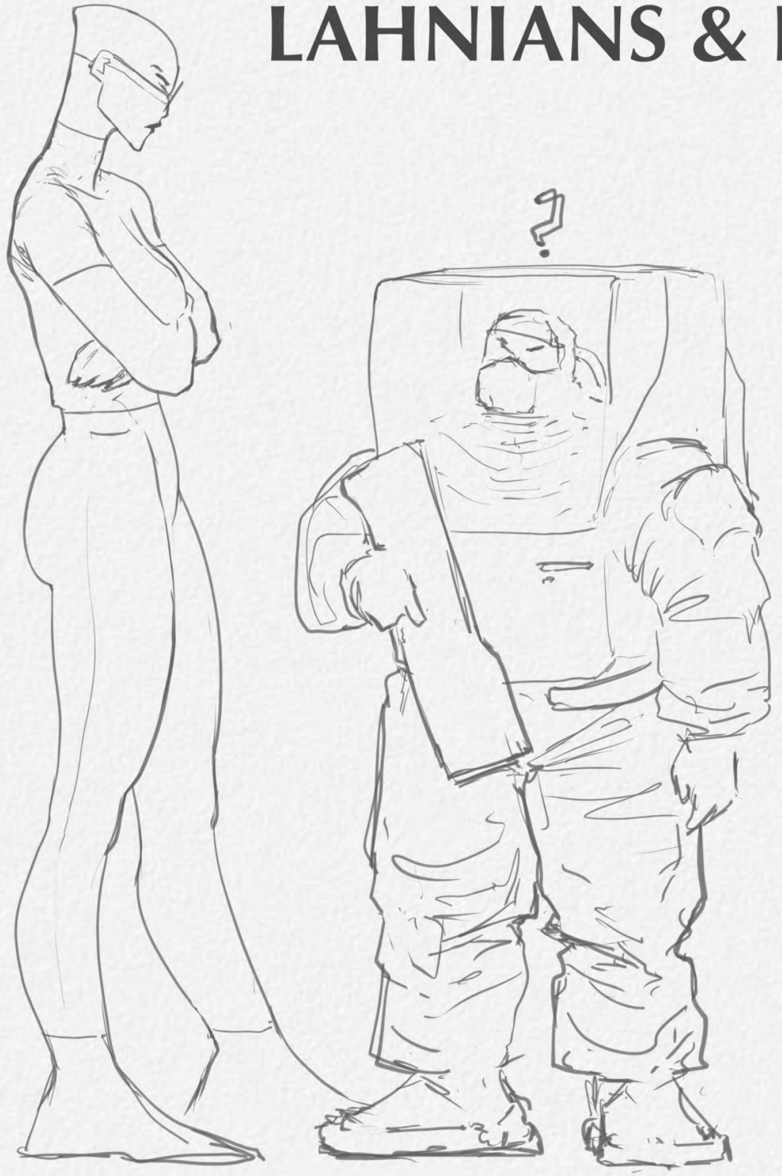
TYRANT AND DROIDS

The Tyrant is a religious extremist and an interplanetary colonizer. His design is inspired by the Western depiction of angels from Abrahamic religions. Many religions spread through slavery, war, and colonization. Those are his tactics as well as he intends to turn the people of Lahn away from their religion to his… while also taking their lands as payment for his "good" work.



The Droids are mindless war machines that follow the orders of the Tyrant. They ride on mechanical war beasts that are inspired by Okapis.

LAHNIANS & EARTHLINGS



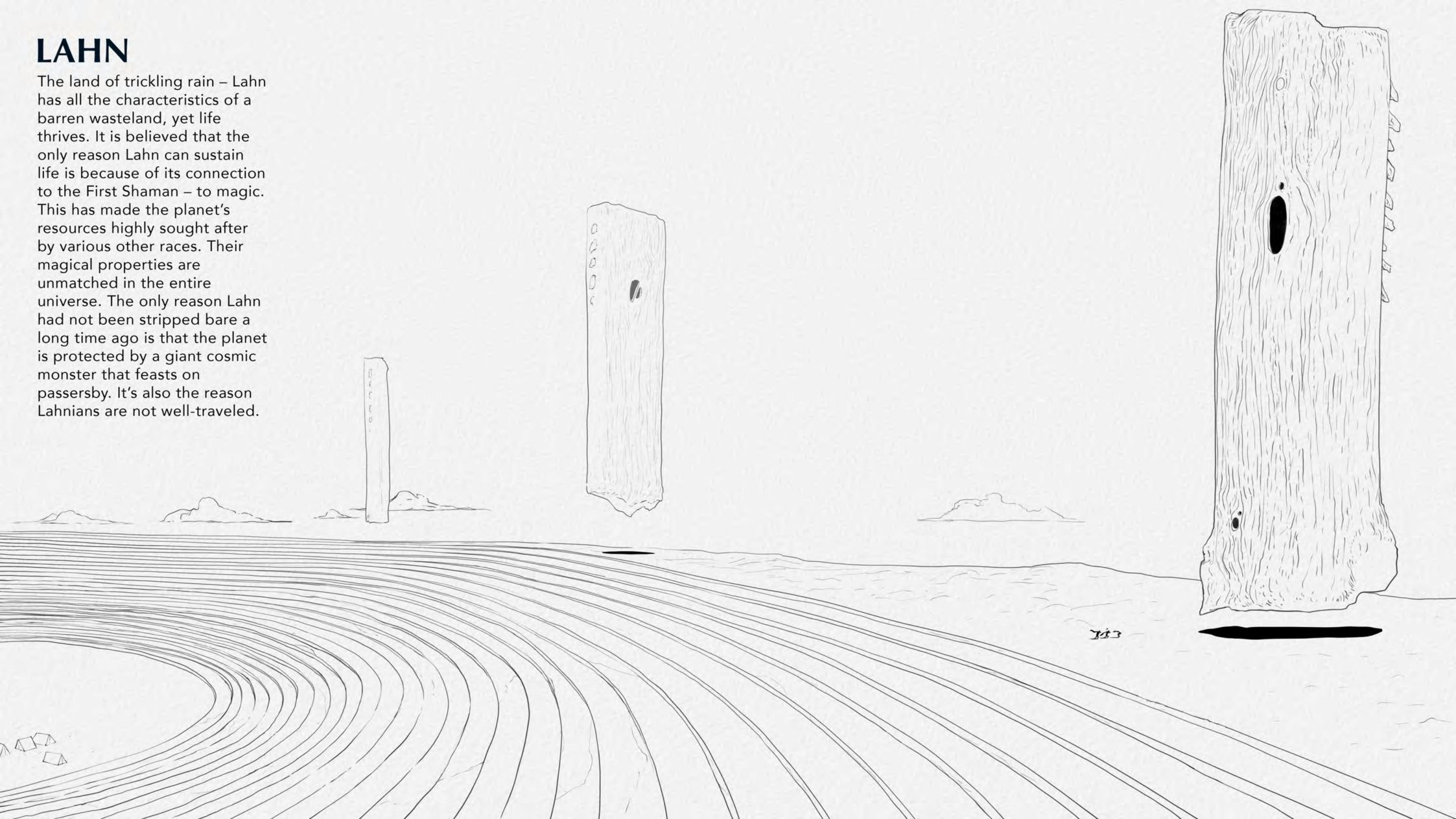
EARTH

Earth is home to humans – the fiercest race of beings in the universe – the builders of weapons of mass destruction – a race we belong to. But the story is set in a future version of Earth that we are not as familiar with.

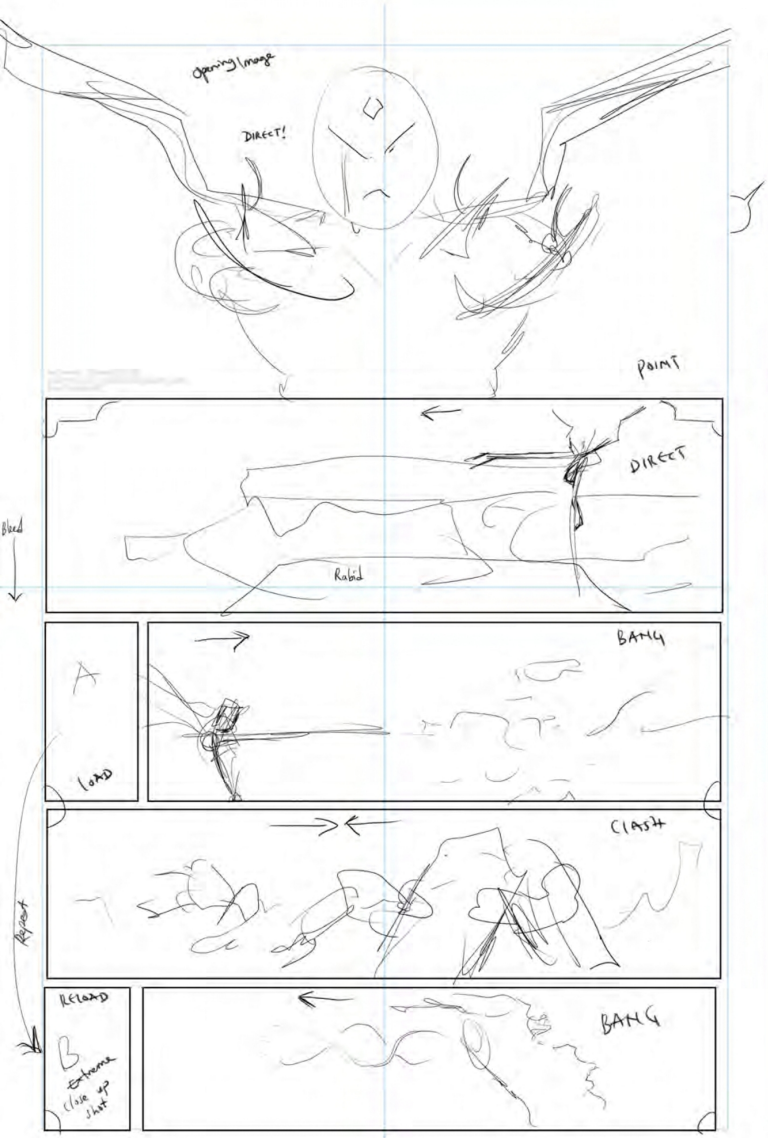
Earth is a planet where the people of Lahn believe they would be safe away from Tyrant and his Droids because Earth has superior ammunition. Earthlings can breathe the air on their planet just fine, but they wear a form of hazmat suit because they constantly fear contamination from other alien races. Earthlings (humans) can be very accepting, but only when the alien race looks more like them and takes on human culture.

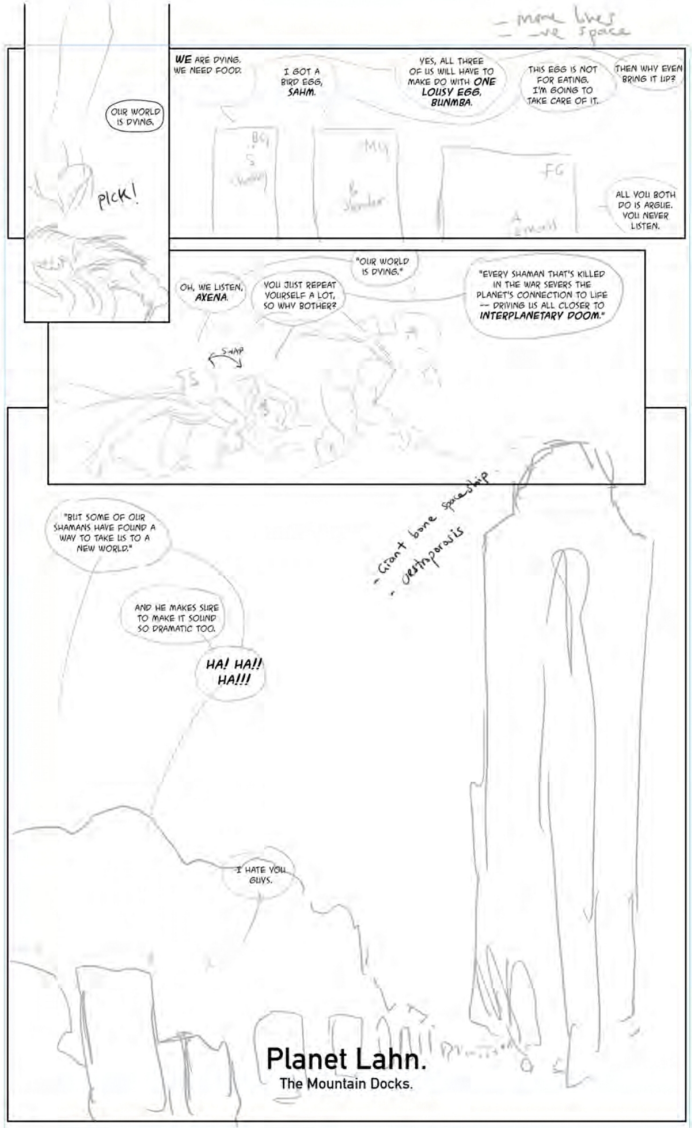
LAHN

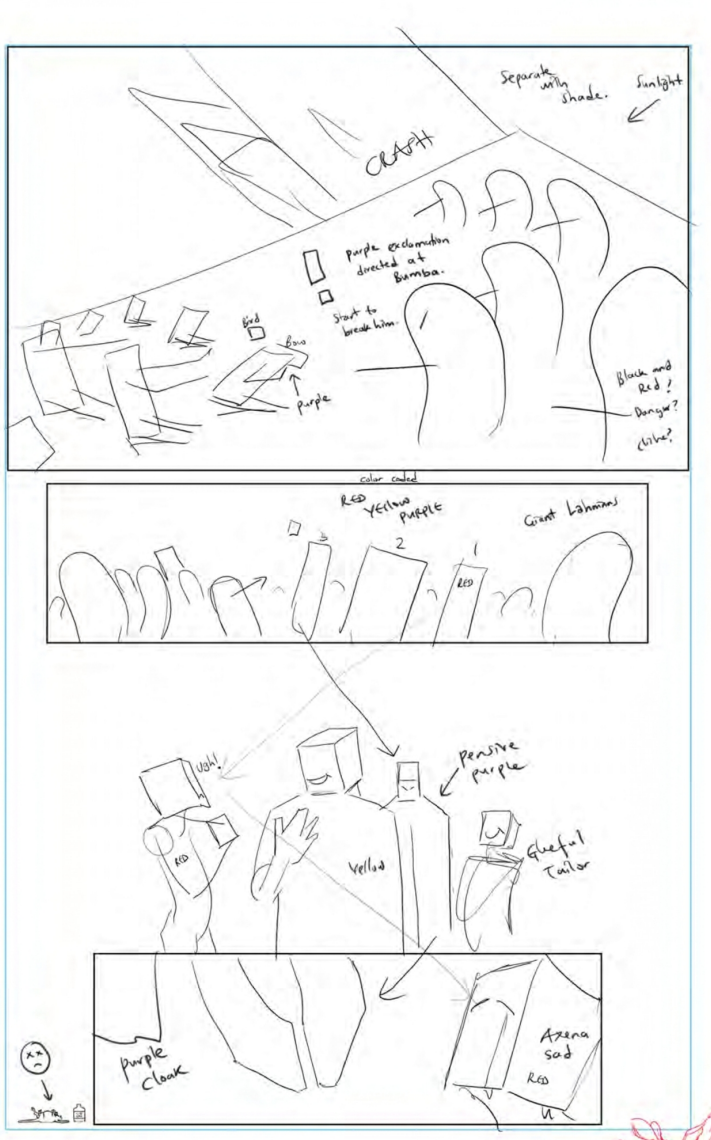
The land of trickling rain – Lahn has all the characteristics of a barren wasteland, yet life thrives. It is believed that the only reason Lahn can sustain life is because of its connection to the First Shaman – to magic. This has made the planet's resources highly sought after by various other races. Their magical properties are unmatched in the entire universe. The only reason Lahn had not been stripped bare a long time ago is that the planet is protected by a giant cosmic monster that feasts on passersby. It's also the reason Lahnians are not well-traveled.



PROCESS


Opening Image
DIRECT!
POINT
DIRECT
Rabid
Bleed
BANG
A
LOAD
CLASH
Repeat
RELOAD
B
Extreme close up shot
BANG

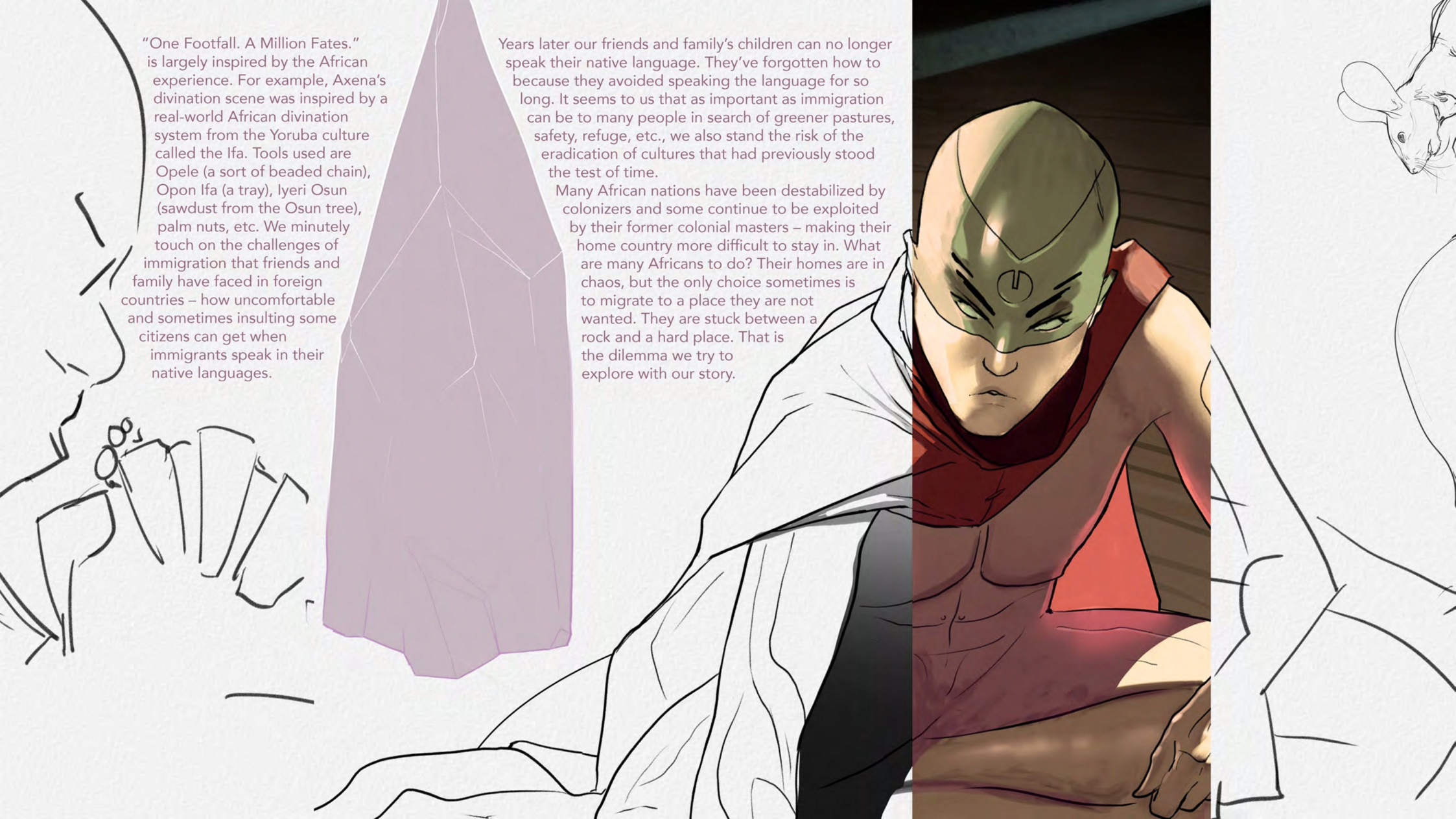

- more lines
- -ve space
OUR WORLD IS DYING.
PICK!
WE ARE DYING. WE NEED FOOD.
I GOT A BIRD EGG, SAHM.
YES, ALL THREE OF US WILL HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH ONE LOUSY EGG, BUNMBA.
THIS EGG IS NOT FOR EATING. I'M GOING TO TAKE CARE OF IT.
THEN WHY EVEN BRING IT UP?
ALL YOU BOTH DO IS ARGUE. YOU NEVER LISTEN.
OH, WE LISTEN, AXENA.
YOU JUST REPEAT YOURSELF A LOT, SO WHY BOTHER?
"OUR WORLD IS DYING."
"EVERY SHAMAN THAT'S KILLED IN THE WAR SEVERS THE PLANET'S CONNECTION TO LIFE -- DRIVING US ALL CLOSER TO INTERPLANETARY DOOM."
"BUT SOME OF OUR SHAMANS HAVE FOUND A WAY TO TAKE US TO A NEW WORLD."
AND HE MAKES SURE TO MAKE IT SOUND SO DRAMATIC TOO.
HA! HA!! HA!!!
I HATE YOU GUYS.
- Giant bone spaceship
- Orthoporosis
Planet Lahn.
The Mountain Docks.


Separate with shade.
Sunlight
CRASH
purple exclamation directed at Bumba.
Start to break him.
Bird
Bow
purple
Black and Red? Danger? Clike?
color coded
RED
Yellow
PURPLE
Giant Lahnians
RED
Uoh!
Pensive purple
RED
Yellow
Glueful Tailor
Purple Cloak
Axena sad
RED

"One Footfall. A Million Fates." is largely inspired by the African experience. For example, Axena's divination scene was inspired by a real-world African divination system from the Yoruba culture called the Ifa. Tools used are Opele (a sort of beaded chain), Opon Ifa (a tray), Iyeri Osun (sawdust from the Osun tree), palm nuts, etc. We minutely touch on the challenges of immigration that friends and family have faced in foreign countries – how uncomfortable and sometimes insulting some citizens can get when immigrants speak in their native languages.

Years later our friends and family's children can no longer speak their native language. They've forgotten how to because they avoided speaking the language for so long. It seems to us that as important as immigration can be to many people in search of greener pastures, safety, refuge, etc., we also stand the risk of the eradication of cultures that had previously stood the test of time.

Many African nations have been destabilized by colonizers and some continue to be exploited by their former colonial masters – making their home country more difficult to stay in. What are many Africans to do? Their homes are in chaos, but the only choice sometimes is to migrate to a place they are not wanted. They are stuck between a rock and a hard place. That is the dilemma we try to explore with our story.



THANK YOU

From the Both of Us—Thank You!

To our incredible backers, everyone who helped promote our campaign one way or the other, fans of our stories, and fellow collaborators on this anthology – we appreciate you and cannot thank you enough. To Beserate, who edited and collated the stories in the anthology, you are awesome. We were able to tell this story that is so dear to our hearts because of everyone's continual faith in us. You mean the world to us.

Much Love,
Dotun Akande (Artist) & Murewa Ayodele (Writer)

...A MILLION FATES!

SILVER OVER GOLD

BEHIND THE SCENES

Content

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02 CHARACTER EXPLORATIONS

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STORY

PITCH

SILVER OVER GOLD

A young deacon is approached by foreigners who ask him to steal and hand them an ancient religious manuscript. He has a father who is gravely ill, and it seems certain that his time is short. Initially, the deacon refuses, but as his father's condition worsens, he ultimately succumbs to temptation and steals the script. However, as he attempts to leave the church premises, an unseen force halts him in his tracks, launching him backward several feet. The manuscript slips from his grasp and falls to the ground. When he picks it up, he discovers a passage describing his father's illness and a local remedy. The cure, he learns, is made from the seed of a tree that stands proudly in his very own yard. In that moment, the deacon realizes that the solution to his father's suffering has been in his hands all along.

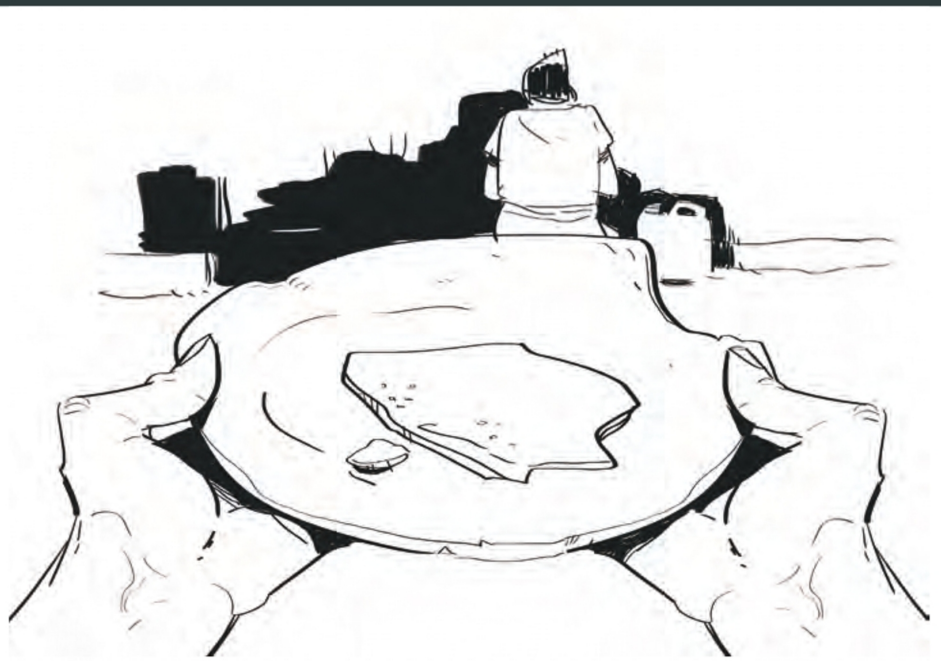
01 STORY VISUAL EXPLORATIONS

The story pitch underwent several revisions, from refining the narrative to ensure it made a strong impact within the limited page count, to ensuring it remained both philosophically and culturally sensitive. We carefully added and removed elements, continually shaping the story. This process involved creating visual representations of key storylines and evaluating which ones resonated most effectively.

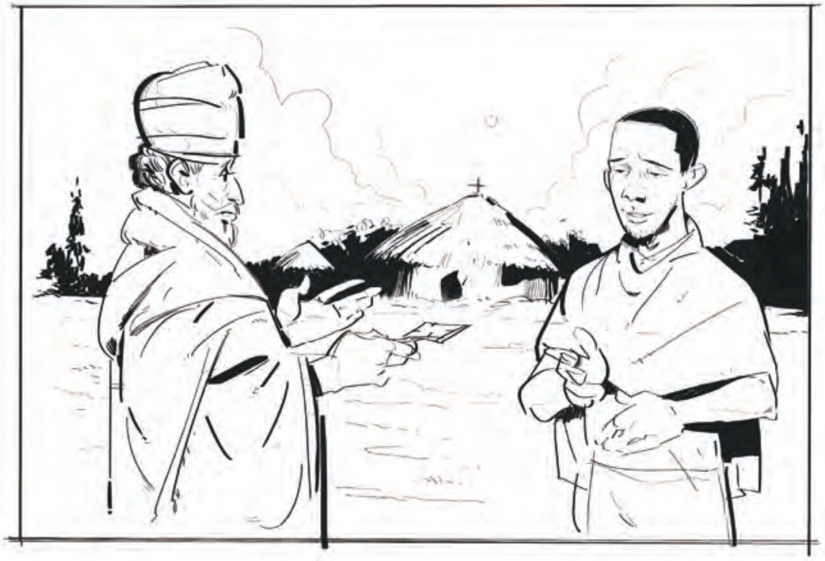
02 CHARACTER EXPLORATIONS

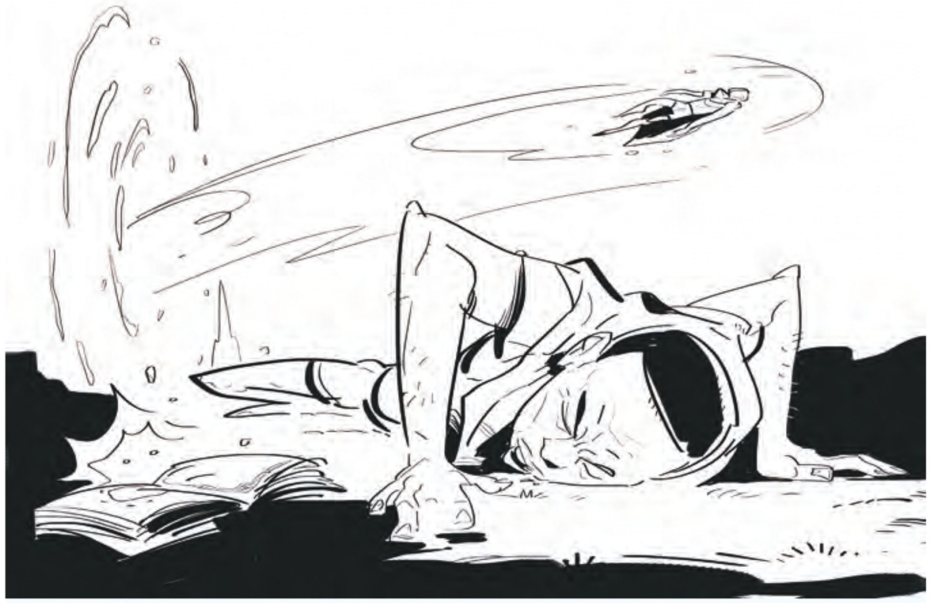
03 STORYBOARD

Once the small snippets were arranged and the skeleton of the final story was in place, we moved on to storyboarding. Instead of focusing on individual pages, we envisioned keyframes for the storyline, collaborating as a team to fill in the gaps. From brainstorming ways to strengthen the inciting incident and adding intensity to it, to incorporating cultural nuances for the chosen setting, this was the moment the story truly took shape. It was here that the story was solidified and received the green light from the entire team to move into final production.



04 COLOR STYLE TEST





Silver over Gold

Silver over Gold

Silver over Gold

Get to know **the team**

Three visual artists based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Kaleab Birhanu
Socials : @kaleab.b
Email : kaleab0648@gmail.com

Ermias Assefa
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Tsion Assefa
Socials : @tsion_m_tesfaye
Email : tsion.tesfa1996@gmail.com

STARS AHEAD

Art & Story By KUBO

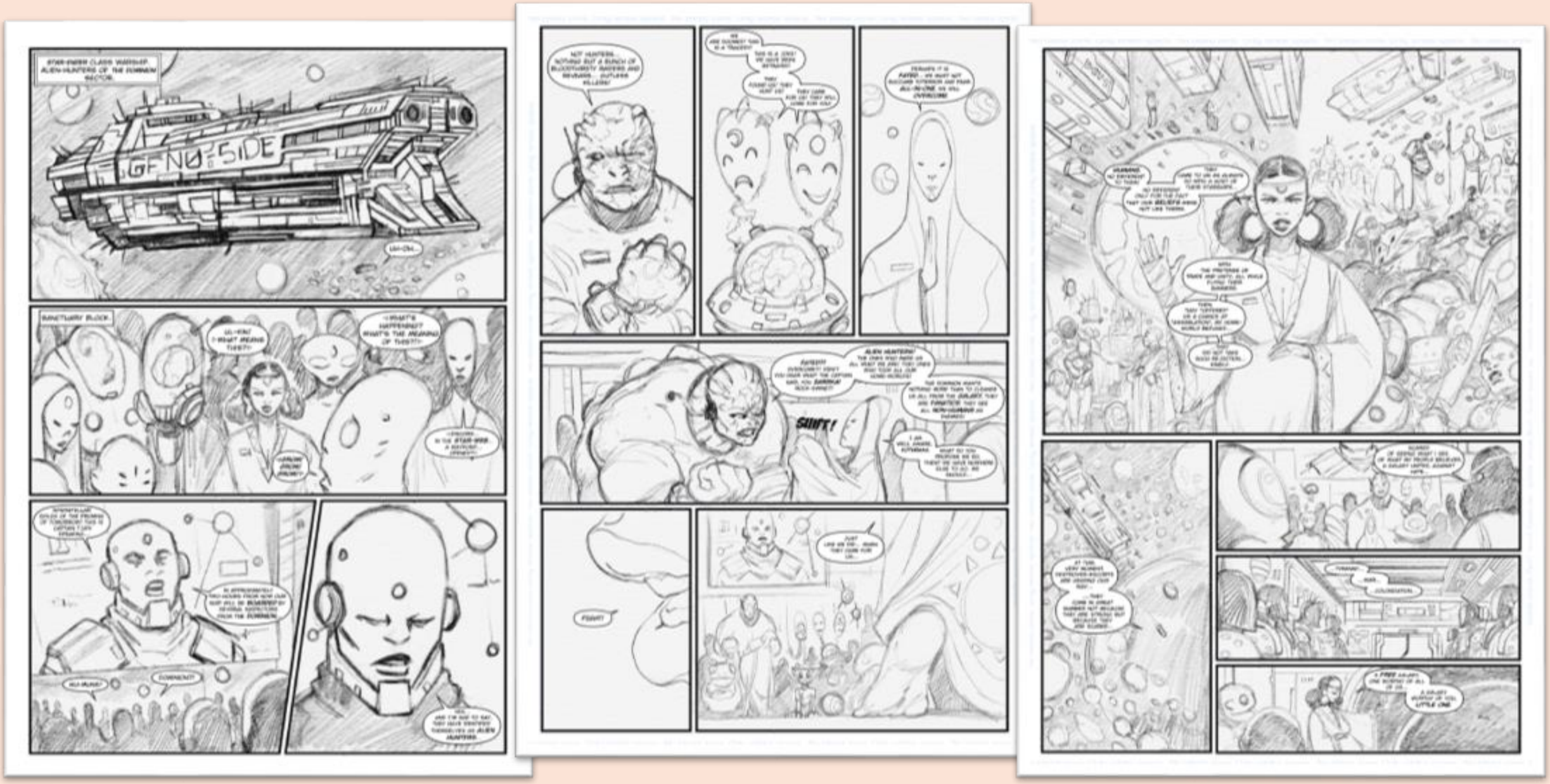
Inspirations, Setting & Lore

It is 10 438 ***Post-Sol.***
It is the far-future and the galaxy is hateful.

These were the first thoughts I had when I initially came up with the storyline of what would be called Stars Ahead. At the moment I came up with it I was wondering what if one took inspiration from works such as Dune, Warhammer 40k and obscure titles like Emperor of the Fading Suns and some of their favourite non-superhero comic books; while making sure to sprinkle in a little bit of African-inspired characters with in it? Hinting at perhaps a larger, wider universe?

The answer is this. A glimpse at moment. A story among countless. A peek at the possibility of something outside the scope of what is seen…

Initially, the storyline was much more *narrative* focused, following the story of an expecting mother recounting how *The Dominion* came to her people's world; a technologically advanced, African-inspired planet on the fringes of their expanding empire; the very same one responsible for the conquest and destruction of countless alien worlds whose survivors she now joins as just another refugee in search of a new home…



With Stars Ahead I decided to skip right to pencils and design, skipping the initial design and concept phase. The world and it's inhabitants came to full realized in my own head and thus it went from abstract thought to page with relative ease.

Subsequent edits in the penciling phase however saw a bit of drastic but similar change to the pages; more focused on the dra ma of the moment and not the introspective, slow cliffhanger the first draft was ramping up to. Both versions of this story achieve the same purpose, each one resolving itself in a similar but different manner.

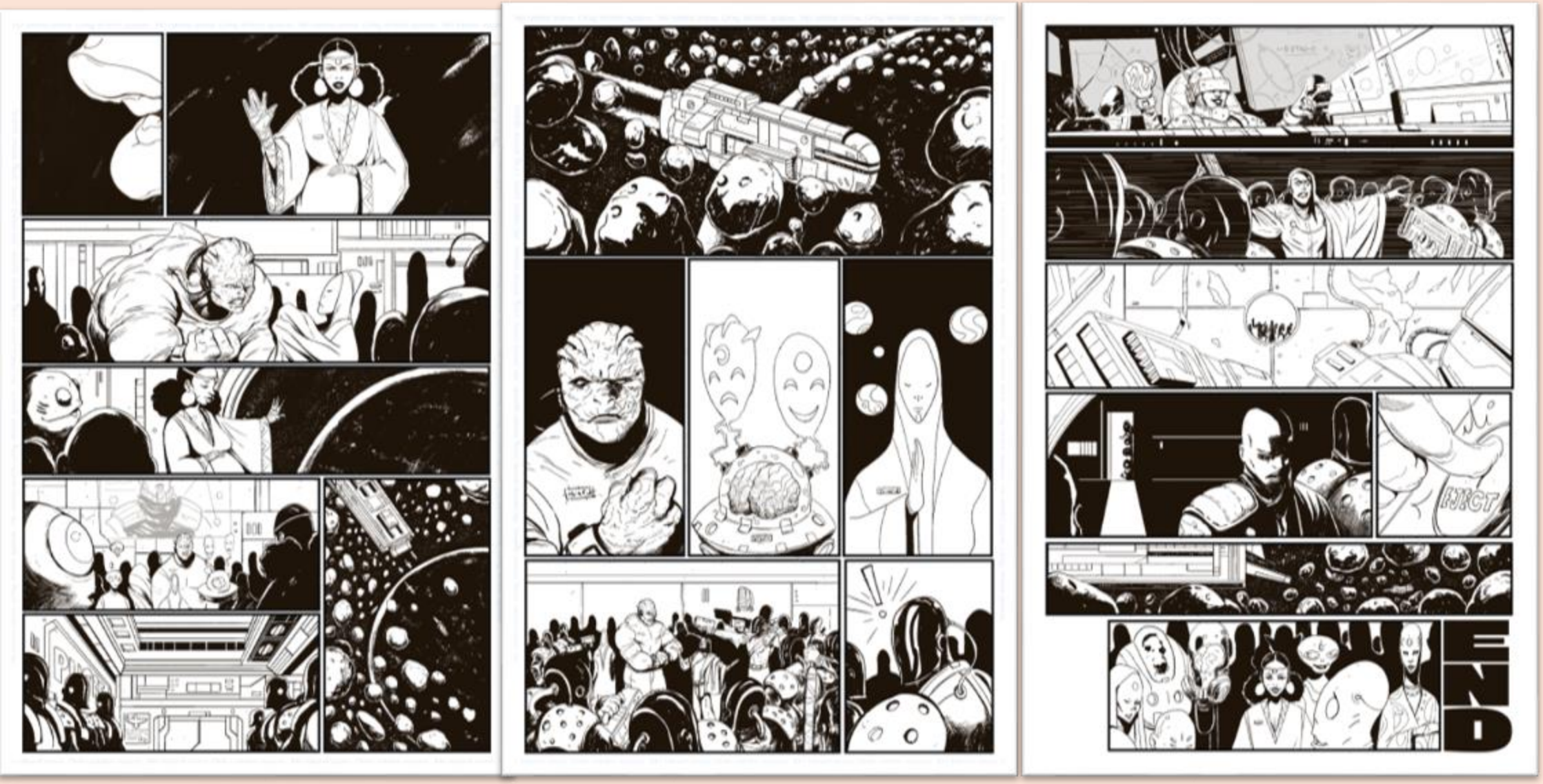
Inspirations, Setting & Lore

Dune, Warhammer 40k, The Metabaron and Emperor of The Fading Suns are the major inspiration of this setting and like them, it takes places roughly ten thousand years in the future; and like them, the world takes a much less idealized version of the far-future; mankind (and others) in this setting do not exist in the Utopian ideal of what we all hope the future might bring; in fact, in a galaxy of countless worlds and countless possibilites, we find that not much has changed and in some instances; things have only gotten worse.

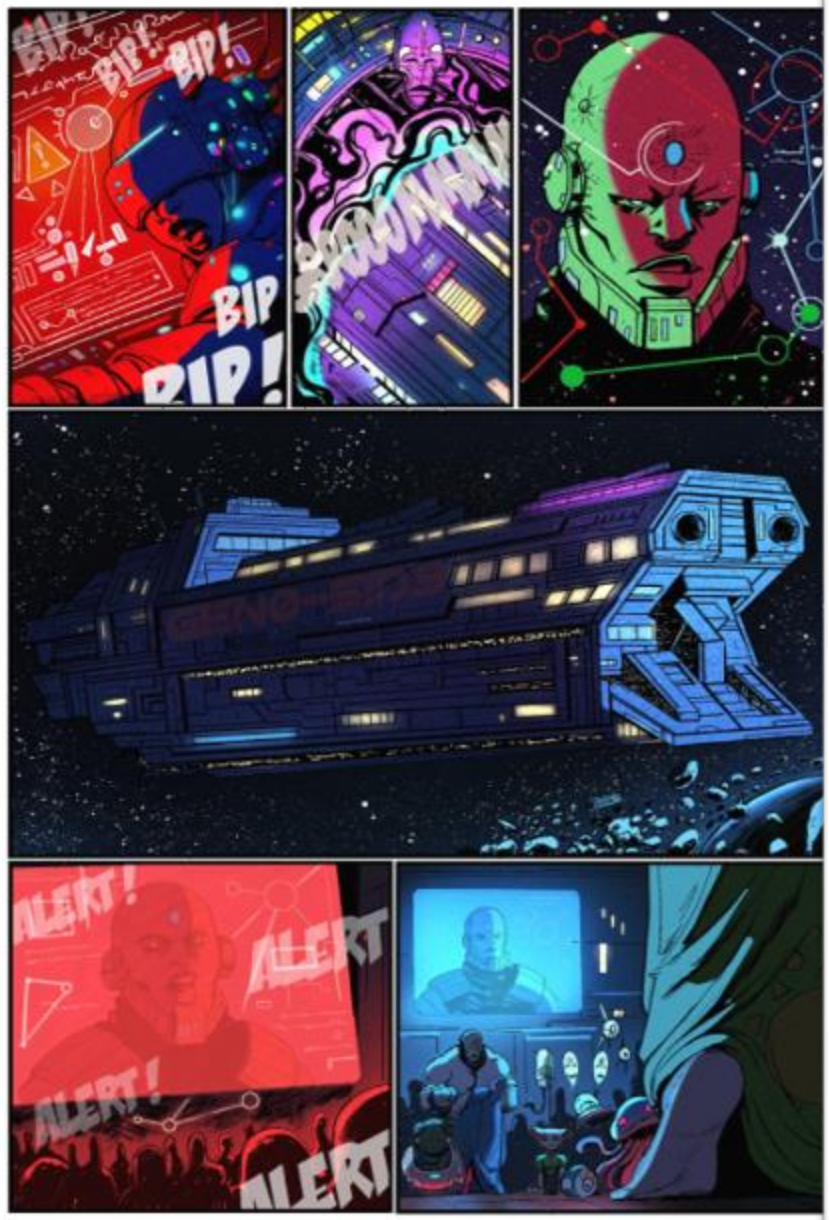
While the final comic doesn't have the semi-splash page of the woman's homeworld from the initial idea, we do get a glimpse of what it could have been; it is a world that is technologically advanced but somehow also deeply ground to the beliefs and aesthetics of what we presume are the African descendant people who have made it their home. It is a planet that is blend of cultures and beliefs, and The Dominion; a totalitarian empire is not that; in fact it is quite uniform and rigid and this because of what the woman's world represents – unity, diversity and harmony, it is invaded and perhaps even destroyed as it stands in stark opposition to what The Dominion, which represents the worse aspects of humanity, stands for.

But throughout this, we see an underlying current of hope for the future, that this event and the wider galaxy is on the verge of something different, a change in the small actions done in defiance of those who wish to bring hate to the hopeful…

Inks and Colors



With the pencils done, and the pages approved by the editor: there was nothing else to do but go through the process all comics go through inks, colors and finalizing.



Thank you for reading and see you in the far-future spacer!

DEMERA

CREATIVE TEAM

AYANA KEBEDE

illustrator

As the main illustrator and head artist of this project, Ayana brought the world and characters to life with his dynamic artwork. With 4+ years of experience in the creative industry, he's dedicated to crafting visually stunning stories that pull readers in from the first panel.

AMANUEL GIRMA

lettering

Amanuel is a motion artist with over six years in the creative industry, bringing stories to life through animation. He worked on the lettering for this project, making sure every word flows seamlessly with the art while keeping the energy and clarity that great comics need.

FITSUM FEKADU

Writer

Fitsum worked as the writer on this project, shaping the story with his creative vision. With experience as a producer and director, plus a background in sales, he brings a unique blend of storytelling and strategy that keeps narratives engaging and impactful.

CHARACTER DESIGNS

INSPIRATIONS

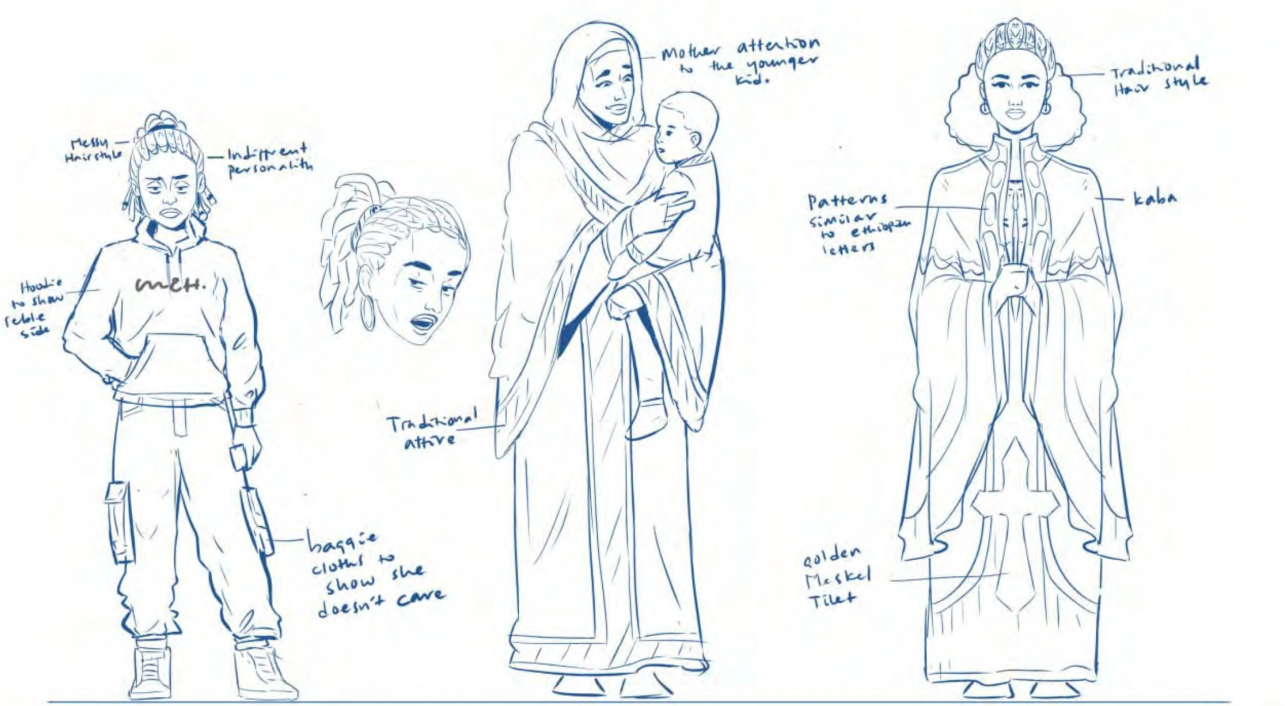
We wanted to stay true to our roots when we began our search for visual inspirations, focussing on authentic Ethiopian art .

KEY CHARACTERS

Nafkot Age 15,
second generation Diaspora

Nafkots Mom Age 41,
Mother of Two

Empress Helena Mythical reincarnation of St Helena of constantinople



Nafkot **Nafkots mom** **Empress Helena**

WORLD BUILDING

STORY SETTING

The story is set in modern day Axum, Ethiopia. Late afternoon during the Meskel Damera celebrations, Nafkot, a second generation diaspora, half heartedly attends the festivities with her mom. When suddenly she finds herself lost in the crowd. This story shows her journey back to her family and her roots.

HISTORICAL INSPIRATION

Helena, mother of Constantine I, was a devout Christian who, According to tradition,traveled to Jerusalem to uncover Christian relics in the early 4th century to discover the True Cross, believed to be the one on which Jesus was crucified. Guided by visions, she found three crosses; a miracle identified the True Cross. Her discovery strengthened Christian faith, and she was later venerated as a saint. We used this historical reference as inspiration that could highlight the difficult journey our characters had to undertake.

CULTURAL RELEVANCE

leaving home in search of truth, faith, and purpose. For Ethiopians, Meskel's symbolism extends to personal and collective journeys, reflecting historical migrations, the pursuit of identity, and the spiritual path to enlightenment. The bonfire (Demera) represents guidance, much like a traveler following a light to a new beginning.

ART PROCESS

SCRIPT

The foundation of the story, where we craft dialogue, narration, and pacing to bring the vision to life.

During the vibrant Demera festival, a young girl finds herself more captivated by her phone than the celebration around her. As her family admires the towering bonfire and the colorful festival, she remains distracted, texting a friend abroad who asks her to share the experience. Searching for a good angle to take pictures, she unknowingly drifts away from her family.

Realizing she's lost, panic sets in. Just as she starts to worry, a regal woman dressed in traditional Ethiopian royal attire places a hand on her shoulder. It is Empress Helena. Warm and composed, Helena asks if she is lost, and the girl hesitantly admits it. They walk together through the festival, and the girl expresses her indifference toward the event, seeing it as nothing more than a big fire.

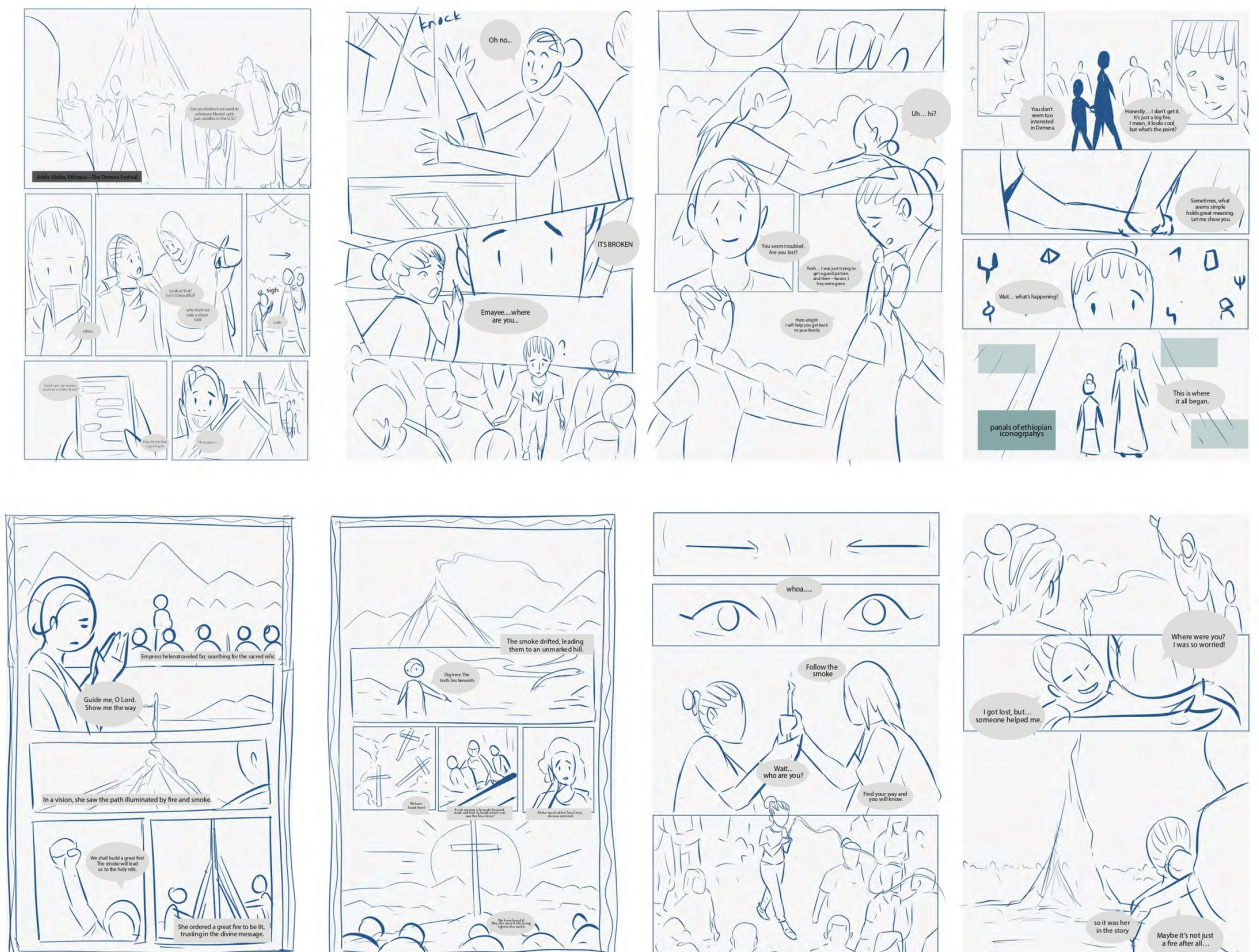
Helena, with a knowing smile, begins to explain. As she speaks, the world around them subtly transforms, shifting into a sensil-style depiction of ancient Ethiopia. She recounts her journey to discovering the True Cross, how a divine dream led her to light a great fire, and how the rising smoke guided her to its hidden resting place. The girl watches in awe as the legend unfolds around her.

Just as suddenly, the vision fades, and she is back in the present. Helena hands her a small burning twig and tells her to follow the smoke. Trusting the guidance, she weaves through the festival crowd and spots her family in the distance. Reuniting with her worried mother, she embraces her family, now seeing the bonfire with fresh eyes. As she turns to look for Helena, the empress is nowhere to be found. Instead, she notices a discarded piece of royal fabric, the same pattern from before, lying on the ground.

Realization dawns ; Helena was real. The festival, the fire, and the journey had taken on a whole new meaning. With her phone now forgotten in her hand, she gazes at the flames, understanding at last that the Demera is more than just a fire ; it's a guide, a symbol of discovery, both in history and in her own life.

SKETCHES

Rough layouts that map out the composition, flow, and key moments before refining the artwork

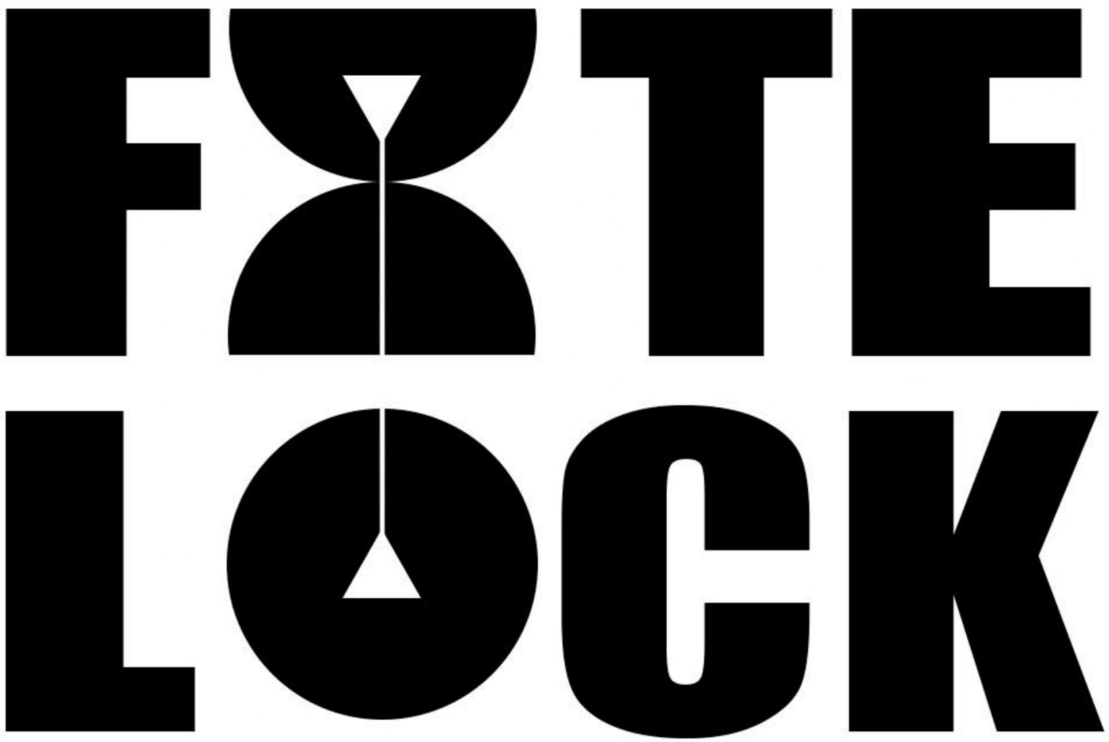


ART

The fully realized illustrations, shaping characters, environments, and action with dynamic detail. After this stage, we proceeded to Placing dialogue, captions, and sound effects seamlessly into the artwork for clear, engaging storytelling.

THANK YOU

A huge thank you to all our backers for believing in this project! Your support means the world to us, and we couldn't have brought this story to life without you. We can't wait for you to experience what we've created. We hope you like it!


FATE
LOCK
Created by Bill Masuku

Bill Masuku

Bill Masuku is an Award-winning Zimbabwean comic book artist and writer currently creating Runeless for Disney Hyperion through the Kugali Ink imprint while self-publishing Captain South Africa and Tokoloshe Hunters. Masuku has worked as a storyboard artist for Triggerfish on a Netflix project and Disney x Kugali's 3-time Emmy Award-nominated series I waju. In 2022, Masuku was featured in Forbes Africa Under 30. in 2024, he was selected for the Creation Africa FOCUS in France supported by Institut Francais among 15 other comic book artists across Africa.

He has been a guest speaker at events such as MCM London Comic Con, FanCon Cape Town, Comic Con Africa, AVI Jozi, and the Harare Literature Festival. In 2019, he was selected as the British Council's Design Futures Africa Storyteller for Zimbabwe, a project centered around sustainable development, the green future, and the informal economy. Masuku was spotlighted as an up-and-coming artist during DC Comics' global event DC Fandome. His comic book artwork has been exhibited in Mozambique for the Maputo Fast Forward Banda Desinhada Exhibition and in the University of Johannesburg's art galley for the African Superheroes exhibition. In 2021, he was a guest lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand as part of the Afro Manga course in the Wits Digital Art School.

FOLLOW: @billmasukuart

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Time Man

A brilliant kid scientist who finally cracked open the mysteres of time travel but in doing so permanently altered his body and unravlled the flow of time in the process. His body is now bi-chronal, he is both old and young at the time time cursed to age and de-age over and over again. To atone for his mistakes he is on a quest to retrieve twelve gears from his time machine that could theoretically put things back the way they are meant to be.

While initially cold and calulating about people and places, because to him they are just hypothetical - he grows to love his team members and appreciate the sanctity of the times and places he visits.

Deep down, this is a all a distraction from the real reason he became obsessed controlling time....

Cave Docter

She comes from distant past where dinosaurs still roamed the plains of Africa but the meteor that was meant to wipe them out missed Earth. To survive in this world humans had two options develop shelter or develop weapons to fend off against the feathered reptiliant apex monsters. Cave Doctor chose a third option: with a 300 IQ she developed medicines to heal the wounded and chemicals to sedate her enemies. With a kind heart and a sharp mind she stands as a loner in a society of selfish savages. But she persists in the face of it all as a promise to herself.

She will never forgive herself for losing her sisters baby during childbirth, as the only doctor on the planet she is needed everywhere but couldn't be where she truly wanted to be, if only she could do things differenty...

Cybersapien

In his past, the world faced a pandemic outbreak of a virus known as CYBER-19. Wiping out 2 thirds of the human race, those that survived using a reverse engineered strain of the techno-organic virus were his ancestors that would go on to become the next step in human evolution. From homosapien to cybersapien.

The massive drop in human population allowed from other cretures in nature to spawn uninhibited by the invasive presence of man - giving rise to what can only be deemed mythical creatures in any other world. The Grootslang, Werehyena, and Bushwalker all roam free in this future.

Algorithms predict another virus is coming, but only one man sees it coming. Can he save his tomorrow...

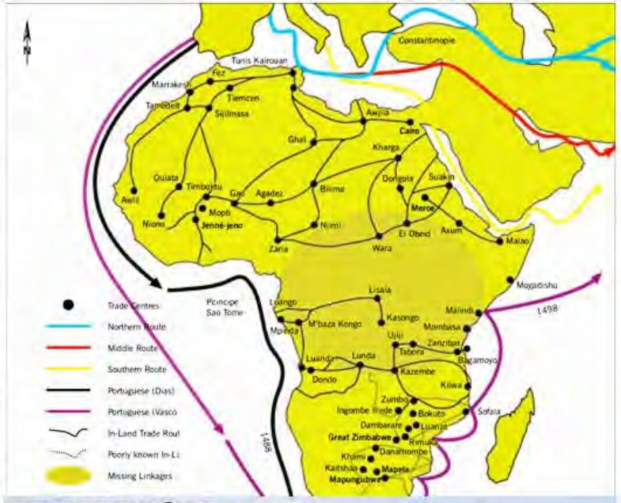
Princess

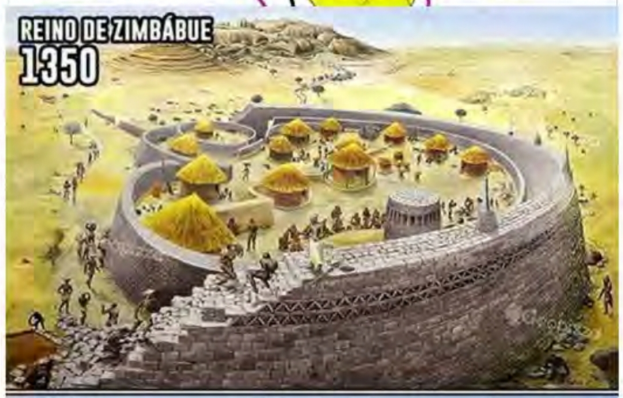
Outside of the civilization of Great Zimbabwe, nomadic tribes thrived in both athleticism and resourcefulness. The problem with nomads is that sentimentality and attachment are outweighed by practicality and logic. Those born differently abled, aren't celebrated for their uniqueness. Gamu who was born with two hearts is no exception to that rule.

Happening upon one of the time gears, she combines it with her natural athletic ability to run. Something that was found as valuable entertainment for travellers and a pleasant distraction fro her waiting for the end.

It was said that her destiny was to vanish into the sand, never to be heard from again. But no one knew it would be the sands of time whisking her away to her true destiny . . .

Great Zimbabwe





"The Kingdom of Zimbabwe was one of the largest in southern Africa, from 1100 to 1450. The stone structure is the Grande Recinto, built as a royal and military residence.

The Kingdom of Zimbabwe emerged thanks to mining and trade with other African, Arab and Asian kingdoms. Ivory was often traded for luxury goods such as Chinese Ming or Persian porcelain. Zimbabwe had more than 150 tributary states, controlling access to gold, copper and iron mines. The society was usually run by men, representatives of royal families. Each man's status was measured by how many cattle and women he owned. While hunting, ranching and weaving were male activities, women worked in agriculture, cooking and transport.

The population around the Great Enclosure numbered nearly 20,000 people, more than half living outside its walls. At 5.5 meters high, the structure had circular canals and a tower at its center, probably serving for religious purposes.

Residences were usually made of mud with thatched roofs, their diameter increasing according to social status. Although informal trade existed, much of it was taxed by the rulers.

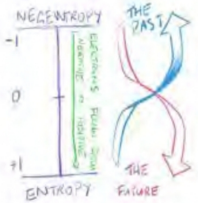
The capital of the kingdom was called Lusvingo, mostly inhabited by the Shona peoples, from the Bantu linguistic trunk. It was later renamed Zimbabwe, meaning "house of stones" influenced by the nomenclature of the future country." **IG: @arch_union**

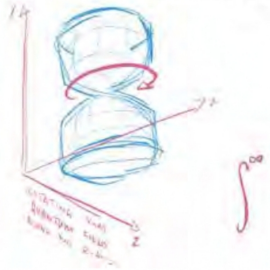
World Building

Somewhere just outside of time and space, a tiny pocket that is neither the beginning nor the end is where our team of troublesome time travellers' base of operations is.

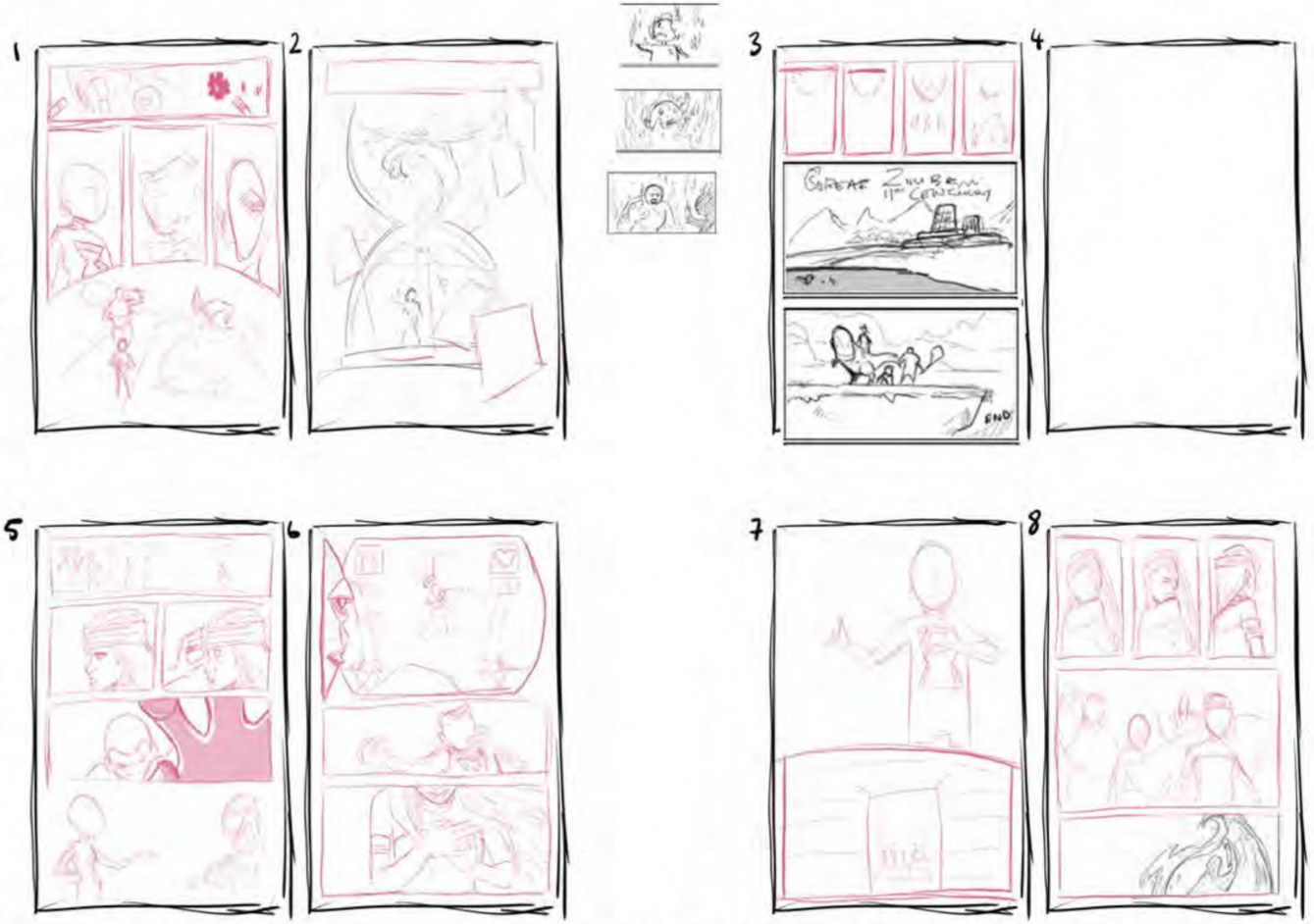
In his journey to repair his self-inflicted damage to reality he picks up some would be heroes from different times that may or may not have happened or will happen. It's all very subjective really.

In thinking about the hourglass and how it fits into the design I considered some kind of time centrifuge. I even sketched out some of the fictional theory that would be the basis for how time travel works in this story. The potential energy of time curves when you move from a fixed past to all the possible futures. And curves the other way when you move from a fixed future to a singular possible past. The places where those curves intersect is the present. But when you rotate those curves along the Z axis you get all futures and all presents to places where fiction is fact.





Pre-Production



Because I'm both the writer and the artist I tend not to write scripts because I know ultimately what I want the story to be and am keenly aware of my artistic limitations. So instead I storyboard the story first, considering what story beats need to be conveyed I have a fairly good idea of how the story starts and how the story ends. In this first pass of the pages Time Man is the one who gives her a speech stating that she can leave it all behind. But I realised that not all the characters were ACTIVE and instead became spectators for Time Man. Which isn't good writing to have an all powerful protagonist do everything. So balanced out their roles in the next pass so pages 5 to 7 were reworked.

Before the Carry On Anthology...

I had hopes of this story being an animated series for kids aged 9-12. I'm not an animator but I am a storyboard artist, so did some very early explorations of what the series Pilot might look like. In the original Time Man didn't have the large gaping hourglass in his body. It was instead a badge like on a uniform for all the characters. I like the new design because its one heck of a recognisable silhouette.

Cave Doctor/Dr Cavewoman is almost exactly the same from storyboards to comic pages.

Cybersapien and Grootslang had the most significant changes. They were initially a cowboy from the future with a ray gun riding on a velocirpator. But as cool as that initially was, its important as African creators to ask ourselves what we are bringing to the zeitgeist of science fiction and fantasy, can someone point at my work and go, "This was made by African hands." So After some soul searching an android design with a monoocular african mask riding a South African mythological creature felt like it fit right into the vibe while bringing something new to the table.

Just FYI a grootslang is often described as a snake like monster but mammoth in size. Given this elephant features often accompany its description but "groot slang" is Afrikaans for "big snake".

After the Carry On Anthology...

I'd want the the FATE LOCK team to explore different kingdoms and eras of great significance across Africa.

1. **Great Zimbabwe** (done!) 11-15th century A medieval city that was a major center for trade, politics, and culture. That later became the Monomotapa Kingdom in the 16th century.
2. **Swahili Coast's Golden Age** 12-15th century marking prosperity in East Africa uniquely blending African, Arabic, and Islmaic cultures.
3. **The Ethiopian Renaissance** 1855 - 1913 artistic explosion of new expressions and styles.
4. **Fela Kuti's Afrobeats Era** 1960 - 1980s the birth of new musical creativity in the development of the genre. And then skip forward to mordern Afrobeats and Naija Pop for the early 2000s to 2025.
5. **The Allotey Formalism** 1950s Ghanian Nuclear Physicist Francis Allotey formulates the tecqhnique used to determine matter in outer space - inspiring Time Man.
6. **CHRTEM at Nelson Mandela University** 2008 - 2010 Study of materials at the atomic level leading to advancements for nanotechnology, South Africa.
7. **The formation of The Watch** 3000 BC Time Man and the team's appearances around time are being watched. At first they are rumour but documentation of their never changing appearances go from mythology to humanity's threat. A small group of watchers at the beginning of civilization grows to become the first Time Tribe bound together by one mission. Stop them.
8. **The Unification of the Galactic Tribes** 8000 AD An Era of universal peace but something more dangerous is about to happen, Time Man is born.

Story Comps

Time Squad MEETS Ben 10 but in Africa!
The hilarious hijinks of visiting different times and moments in history mixed with the action packed antics of a kid using a power far greater than his own understanding.

While Time Squad falls solely on the goofy side and despite it having moments of levity, Ben 10 sits proudly in the action genre. I want FATE LOCK to be a unique blend of these distinct tones in a way that modern anime invokes laughter and awe.

Why Time Travel?

The themes of this coming of age story center on found family, companionship as salvation, and Pride before downfall.

All those elements and more at the heart of the best time travel stories for me. Stories about being literally and figuratively coming from different backgrounds and finding a home in each other. Facing extraordinary circumstances and overcoming them with humility in the face of the grander scheme of all of time and space. Because it is often those who think they are control that have the most to lose.

Added to that there is a running joke among sci-fi consumers of colour that we can't just time travel willy-nilly. There are places and time periods where we just aren't welcome or would be safe. I want readers to see there are more places in history where we are celebrated.

The Magic System

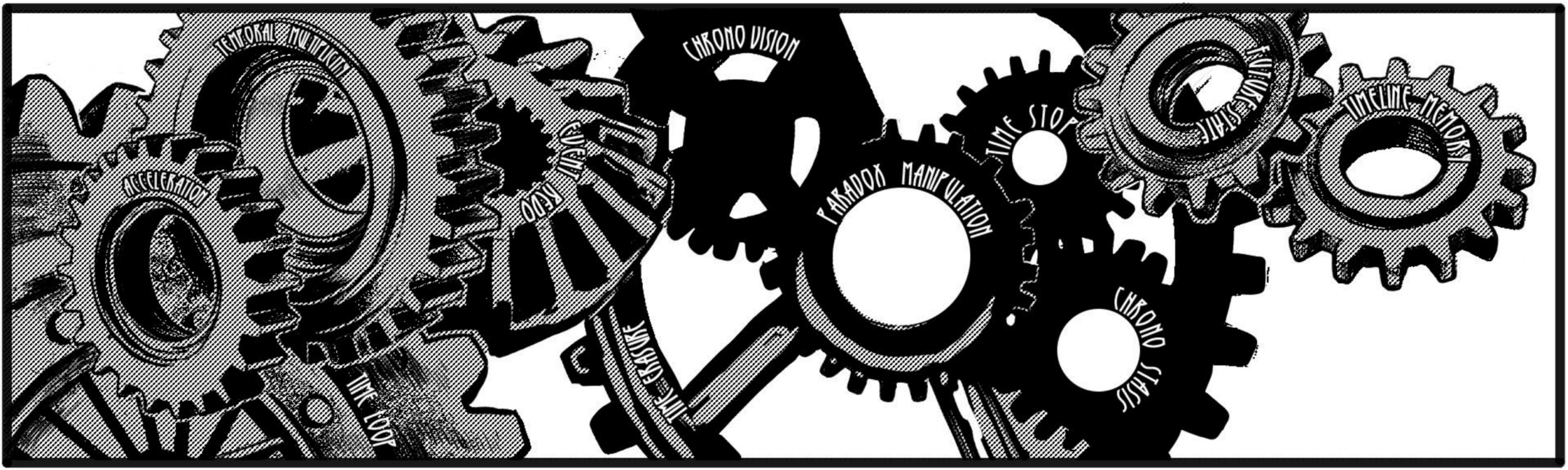
Analog clocks, digital watches, sundials, and sand in an hour glass have always fascinated me. Humans have gone through the painstaking effort of measuring time in all ways right up to an attosecond. I don't even know how many zeros that contains but it sounds SO cool!

Time travel has always been depicted as light, a doorway with spinning rings, warped and folded space, the sound of a TARDIS fading in and out of existence,or just straight electricty around a person as they vanish.

All of these LOOK like teleportation - in the sense that if the next scene had them in the same place but a day before you'd need an explanation, some extra evidence that they didn't just move through space.

The sands of time....

There is something so unique about that that I've only ever seen in Prince of Persia, but even then it wasn't expressed in the way that I would have done it. Breaking someone or something's particles down into a suggestible state. Into a trillion grains of maybe's, and if's, and perhap's. A true quantum state of vibrating variables and then slipping it though a needle sized hole in the fabric of space to a different point. Like pouring sand through an hour glass today, and watching the grains fill back up like a download on the side in another time.



1. Acceleration
The holder of this gear can themselves up and or anything they are touching. The draw back is they age rapidly in the process.

2. Temporal Multiplicity
The holder of this gear can produce time clones. All clones share one mind and are difficult to control.

3. Event Redo
The holder can go back in time, but new branch is created.

4. Time Loop
The holder can created a fixed window where events replay. But when the loop breaks all events are reset as if it was all a dream.

5. Chrono Vision
The holder of this gear can see time itself and the flow of things that have been and things that will be.

6. Time Erasure
The holder of this gear can erase the outcome of an event and choose a new branch. But as long as the gear is active it can not be used again.

7. Paradox Manipulation
The holder of this gear can affect the past without affect the future of the same branched timeline.

8. Time Stop
The holder of this gear can move through space while all other events are suspended. In this time no actions are recorded and suffer from causality corrosion.

9. Chrono Stasis
The holder of this gear can suspend the animation of one object while all other events continue. But upon release object will discharge quantum radiation.

10. Future State
The holder of this gear can shift themselves or an object to a potential future version. That particular future then becomes unstable.

11. Timeline Memory
The holder of this gear can retain the knowledge of all events they've experienced. However there is no order to which memories are the "real" ones.

12. MISSING
???

THANK YOU

FATE LOCK would still be wishful thinking if wasn't for you bringing us to the timeline where it exists!

THE ART AND MAKING OF
CARRY ON